

Attorney General  
McMurtry-Scott Building  
720 Bay Street  
11th Floor  
Toronto ON M7A 2S9  
Tel: 416-326-4000  
Fax: 416-326-4016

Procureur général  
Édifice McMurtry-Scott  
720, rue Bay  
11<sup>e</sup> étage  
Toronto ON M7A 2S9  
Tél.: 416-326-4000  
Télééc.: 416-326-4016

RECEIVED



Our Reference #: MC-2018-948

MAY 08 2018

Mr. Neil Vincent  
274 Josephine Street  
PO Box 90  
Wingham, Ontario  
N0G 2W0

Dear Mr. Vincent:

Thank you for your letter concerning Bill 175, *Safer Ontario Act, 2018*. As Attorney General, I am pleased to respond, and I apologize for the delay in responding.

As you may be aware, Justice Michael H. Tulloch was appointed to lead an independent review of Ontario's three policing oversight bodies: the Special Investigations Unit (SIU), the Office of the Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD), and the Ontario Civilian Police Commission (OCPC). After extensive consultation with more than 1,500 people from across the province, Justice Tulloch's Report of the Independent Police Oversight Review (IPOR report), including 129 recommendations, was released on April 6, 2017.

When the IPOR report was released, I committed to introducing legislation that used Justice Tulloch's recommendations as a blueprint for reforming Ontario's policing oversight system. I am pleased to inform you that, on March 8, 2018, the government passed the *Safer Ontario Act, 2018* (formerly Bill 175) which implements 118 of 119 recommendations directed towards the Ministry of the Attorney General – the most significant overhaul of policing oversight since the oversight bodies were created.

The *Safer Ontario Act, 2018* is based on four key principles outlined in the IPOR report which include:

1. Increasing openness: taking an open-by-default approach to sharing information with the public regarding investigations, thereby keeping them better informed about the investigative process;
2. Increasing accountability: requiring mandatory cooperation from police officers in oversight investigations and by accessing the tools needed for policing oversight bodies to become more effective;
3. Increasing public confidence: increasing public confidence by restricting investigations and decision making about public complaints regarding the conduct of policing officials to policing oversight bodies only; and,

.../2

4. Increasing cultural competency: improving the cultural competence of the oversight bodies through new training, more diverse staff, and better data collection.

To increase the independence, openness, and accountability of the policing oversight bodies, the new legislation will:

- strengthen the obligation of policing officials to comply with oversight investigations;
- authorize the Attorney General to regulate the proportion or number of investigators who may be former policing officials;
- require the delivery of training to employees of the police oversight bodies that promotes recognition and respect for the diverse, multiracial and multicultural character of Ontario and the rights and cultures of First Nation, Inuit and Métis Peoples;
- provide authority for the policing oversight bodies to collect and publicly report on demographic data, including race-based data; and,
- expand the Ontario Ombudsman's jurisdiction to all three oversight bodies.


The *Safer Ontario Act, 2018* is a comprehensive public safety legislation package that modernizes our approach to community safety. It improves policing oversight, transparency and accountability, enhances civilian governance, responds to the needs and realities of Ontario's diverse communities and mandates local community safety and well-being planning.

The *Safer Ontario Act, 2018* sets out that the OIPRD will, after a phase-in period of five years, conduct 100% of public complaint investigations, instead of referring complaints back to police services. There will likely be cost savings realized by municipal policing budgets during the transition period and when the OIPRD is conducting 100% of all public complaint investigations.

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS) is responsible for ensuring the safety and security of communities across Ontario through effective policing, correctional services and emergency services programs. As such, the responsibility for many of the issues you addressed in your letter, such as municipalities adopting community safety and well-being plans fall under the purview of MCSCS. For your convenience, I have copied the Minister of MCSCS, the Honourable Marie-France Lalonde on this letter.

We are confident that these changes will make Ontario a leader in policing oversight with a system that is robust, open and accountable. Once again, thank you for taking the time to contact the ministry.

Sincerely,



Yasir Naqvi  
Attorney General

c: The Honourable Marie-France Lalonde