



December 19, 2018

Dear Mayor and Council,

RE: Bill 66, Restoring Ontario's Competitiveness Act

The [Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition](#) represents 17 local groups of citizens who are concerned about the health of Lake Simcoe. The [Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition](#) represents 35 groups from across Simcoe County and the province including ratepayers, naturalists, indigenous communities and climate advocates who want to create a more prosperous Simcoe County through protection of our water, green spaces and sustainable development.

Recently, the provincial government tabled Bill 66, Restoring Ontario's Competitiveness Act. This bill would enable municipalities to pass an Open for Business Bylaw which would remove key protective policies for our water, farmland and green spaces in favour of expediently processing development applications which may create employment opportunities. These policies which are under attack are not small, insignificant pieces of legislation. Rather they are keystone policies that keep our water clean and safe to drink, including the Clean Water Act, the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan and the Great Lakes Protection Act.

Our coalitions stand behind these protective policies and their implementation because we know that local economies and the public's health rely on them. For example, Lake Simcoe contributes \$200 M per year to its regional economy. The Clean Water Act, which was a direct to the tragedies in Walkerton, ensures that drinking water sources for Ontarians are free from contamination. We appreciate the need for economic opportunities, but we strongly believe that economic opportunities do not have to come at the expense of our drinking water, lakes or green spaces.

And some of your fellow mayors agree with us on that point. On Thursday December 13th, the Mayor of Barrie, [Jeff Lehman, added his name](#) to the growing list of Mayors who have criticized Bill 66. The Mayors of [Hamilton, Burlington](#), Halton Hills, Milton, Aurora, Oakville and [Guelph](#) have also come out against [Bill 66](#). These mayors appreciate the need to protect public health and understand their economies depend on a healthy environment.

Many citizens are very concerned about Bill 66. They want to hear that their councils believe community development and protection of our environment can coexist and be mutually supportive. To learn more about Bill 66 see the Canadian Environmental Law Association's briefing document at : <http://www.cela.ca/sites/cela.ca/files/CELABriefingNote-Bill66andCWA.pdf>

Today, we are calling on all municipal councils in the Lake Simcoe watershed, and in Simcoe County, to reassure those citizens that their water and green spaces won't be sacrificed. We respectfully ask that your council put safety and good regulation first and publicly commit not to use Bill 66. To that end, we enclose an example motion which could be considered by your council.

We would appreciate notification of any actions taken by Council regarding Bill 66.

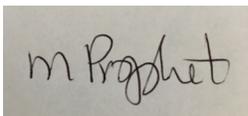
Sincerely,



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