

The Corporation of the City of Cambridge
Corporate Services Department
Clerk's Division
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February 14, 2024

Re: Catch and Release

At its Council Meeting of February 13, 2024, the Council of the Corporation of the City of Cambridge passed the following Motion:

WHEREAS this council believes that the safety of our community and its protection from crime in all its forms is of utmost importance.

WHEREAS our taxpayer-funded judicial system exists to protect the public, who in return for their tax dollars are entitled to a system that works.

WHEREAS the number of charges laid for failure to comply with court orders – primarily failure to comply with the terms of a promise to appear, undertaking, recognizance, probation order, or peace bond – are steadily on the rise in the province of Ontario.

WHEREAS there has been a notable increase in the number of violent offences committed in the province of Ontario by individuals who are concurrently subject to release orders.

WHEREAS the Ontario justice system is backlogged, court systems under strain, and police and prosecutors overwhelmed by their caseloads.

WHEREAS we have seen a dramatic lowering of the threshold for release, resulting in violent, serious, or repeat offenders who should by rights have been reasonably detained in custody, released on supervision plans that are increasingly deficient.

WHEREAS the general sense among the criminal population is that breaching bail conditions will not result in much by way of consequence for the offender, as evidenced by a clear pattern province-wide of unjustifiable release, a pattern which is bound to continue given insufficient resources to conduct Crown bail reviews, surety bond estreatment hearings, and ensure the subsequent collection of surety bond funds after judgment.

WHEREAS a 'catch and release' system constitutes a failure of government to perform a core function of its existence, that being the protection of public safety and that this failure constitutes a clear and present danger to the public.

WHEREAS the current hard drug crisis has contributed to a desperate criminal element that is exacting a significant financial and emotional toll on communities across Canada including Cambridge.

WHEREAS our police services are being demoralized by expending precious time and resources having to manage the repeated arrests of these habitual criminal offenders within a system that limits their ability to effectively protect the public.

AND WHEREAS this ineffective follow-through by our judicial system unfairly erodes the public's trust in our police services, who consequently become the target of frustrated and angry residents who feel they are no longer being protected from crime.

AND WHEREAS the increasing erosion of public faith and trust in our judicial system ultimately brings the administration of justice in the province of Ontario into disrepute and leads to a growing feeling amongst residents that they are no longer protected by a system perceived to prioritize the rights and freedoms of the criminal over the rights and safety of themselves and their families.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Clerk for the City of Cambridge send a letter to the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, the Honourable Arif Virani, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Attorney General of Ontario Doug Downey, Ontario Solicitor General Michael Kerzner, the Honourable Doug Ford Premier of Ontario, MP Bryan May, MP Valerie Bradford, MPP Jess Dixon, MPP Bryan Riddell, Police Chief Mark Crowell, Waterloo Regional Police Service, all Ontario Police Associations and Police Departments, Ontario Provincial Police, all Ontario MPPs and MPs, and all municipalities throughout Ontario for their endorsement consideration, requesting additional funding in Ontario's legal system to support a meaningful resistance to the current "catch and release" practice, including hiring sufficient court staff, with a specific focus on additional assistant Crown Attorneys.

Should you have any questions related to the approved resolution, please contact me.

Yours Truly,



Danielle Manton
City Clerk

Cc: (via email)

Hon. Prime Minister Trudeau

Hon. Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada

Attorney General of Ontario

Ontario Solicitor General

Hon. Premier Ford

Ontario Police Associations

Ontario Police Departments

Ontario MPPs and MPs

All Ontario Municipalities