

October 28, 2025

SENT VIA EMAIL

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier's Office
Room 281
Main Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A5

Dear Premier Ford,

Re: East Gwillimbury's Opposition to the *Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act, 2025*.

For your information and records, at its meeting of Municipal Council held on October 21, 2025, the Council of the Town of East Gwillimbury enacted as follows:

WHEREAS on April 17, 2025, the Government of Ontario brought forth Bill 5: "Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy", a broad omnibus legislation that introduces sweeping changes to multiple environmental and planning statutes, including the Environmental Assessment Act, Endangered Species Act, Ontario Heritage Act, and others; and

WHEREAS this legislation was passed through the legislature in 49 days, thus limiting opportunities to provide feedback; and

WHEREAS Bill 5 received Royal Assent on June 5, 2025; and

WHEREAS the "Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy" Act, 2025 enables the creation of Special Economic Zones (SEZs), which allow the provincial cabinet to exempt projects from compliance with municipal bylaws, environmental protections, and Indigenous consultation obligations; and

WHEREAS lands under protection through various provisions, such as the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Greenbelt Protected Countryside, constitute 83% of the total EG area, which makes EG relevant in environmental stewardship for the Region and the Province; and

WHEREAS the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Greenbelt Plan are foundational to protecting the ecological and hydrological integrity of the region, and the provisions in the Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act, 2025 directly conflict with the objectives of these plans; and

Town of East Gwillimbury

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WHEREAS in alignment with the 2022 – 2024 Strategic Plan, EG Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2023 and approved the EG's Thinking Green Environmental Strategy in 2024, highlighting EG's commitments and efforts to preserve and restore the environment as EG grows; and

WHEREAS the Town of East Gwillimbury achieved 92% of its 2024 housing target, regardless of current environmental provisions, demonstrating that promoting sustainable growth is not only responsible but necessary;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council acknowledges the stated goals of economic growth and development in the Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act, 2025, but expresses serious concerns with the Act as it interferes with local planning, limits public consultation, is inconsistent with the principles of free, prior and informed consent in consultation processes with Indigenous communities, and weakens protections to heritage and species, and formally opposes the Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act, 2025 in its current form; and

THAT Council endorses the position of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) in requesting that municipalities be included in the development of any regulatory frameworks related to Special Economic Zones; and

THAT Council directs staff to submit this resolution to:

- *The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario*
- *The Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing*
- *The Honourable Todd McCarthy, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks*
- *The Honourable Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Francophone Affairs, President of the Treasury Board, and MPP for York-Simcoe*
- *The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)*
- *All Ontario municipalities for their awareness and consideration*
- *The Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA)*
- *Donna Big Canoe, Chief of the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation*
- *Abram Benedict, Ontario Regional Chief (ORC) for the Chiefs of Ontario;*
and

THAT Council encourages residents to contact their MPPs to express concerns about the impacts of the Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act, 2025, on local governance, environmental protection, and Indigenous rights..

If you have any further questions, feel free to contact the undersigned.

Yours truly,



Amanda McNeil, Hon. B.A., M.M.St.
Legislative Coordinator

CC:

The Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
The Honourable Todd McCarthy, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
The Honourable Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Francophone Affairs, President of the
Treasury Board, and MPP for York–Simcoe
The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
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