**How to talk to your MPP or Municipal Councillor about Bill 66**

**General Tips:**

* Introduce yourself (i.e., I am a mother, student, new Canadian, teacher, farmer, etc.).
* Make a personal connection by explaining why protecting our farms, drinking water, natural ecosystems, and smart urban development is important to you. Consider sharing your fears, hopes or vision. Some of these values may be shared.
* Make your concerns local. Why is this important for your community in particular? Is it a farming community? How does your family/community benefit from access to local food, natural ecosystems, safe clean water…
* **Ask your MPP** to vote against Bill 66. **Ask your municipal councillor** to refuse to exempt any new development from Clean Water Act, the Great Lakes Protection Act, the Greenbelt Act, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, the Ontario Planning and Development Act, the Lake Simcoe Protection Act, or any of the other important Acts this Bill stands to bypass and exempt.

**Talking Points for Phone Calls and Meetings with MPPs:**

* **Waterloo Region residents care deeply about water quality and supply, agricultural and rural communities, natural ecosystems, and the continued smart growth of our urban cores.**
* **We have made great progress in protecting our water** (regional source water protection)**, agricultural land** (regional Protected Countryside designation) **and our natural ecosystems** (regional Countryside Line and Environmentally Sensitive Landscape designations)and **our leadership on these rural protections** in combination with the **smart growth of our urban areas** should be a source of pride to everyone in Waterloo Region.
* **The agricultural sector is our largest local industry** and is economically important contributing over half a billion dollars to our local economy every year**.**
* **Bill 66 undermines democracy.** Our citizens expect to be involved in decisions about how and where development takes place. These are decisions that we make intentionally and democratically together. We expect communications and public meetings as well the having the ability to appeal bad decisions. If Bill 66 becomes law, the only notice residents would receive of an impending development is when the first bulldozer arrives.
* **Bill 66 Bypasses Important Regional Planning and Government.** We count on the Region of Waterloo to ensure strong co-ordination and collaboration between all of our local municipalities. Bill 66 bypasses upper-tier governments completely rendering all of our regional planners, hydrologists and water experts, public health officials, and many other important officials powerless as Bill 66 is solely between the lower-tier municipality and the Minister.
* Our protected greenspaces have the capacity to store as much carbon dioxide as would be emitted by millions of cars a year. Interfering with our crucial ecosystems means threatening our own health and missing out on **a chance to meet important climate targets**.
* **Bill 66 is** **unnecessary for promoting growth**. Our economy is already thriving. Growth can continue within vibrant urban centers and places already designated for future expansion balanced by surrounding countryside.
* **There is no shortage of development lands or room for growth**. A recent Neptis Foundation study found there is more than enough lands already designated to accommodate growth in Southern Ontario to 2031 and beyond. In fact, some communities have such an over-designation of land that it will take decades just to develop the lands already designated for growth.
* **Bill 66 exempts developers from rules that are crucial to protecting human health.** For example, it undermines the Clean Water Act, which protects people from tragedies like the one that happened in Walkerton, where water contamination led to 7 deaths and thousands of cases of severe illness. This bill threatens vital water sources for Ontarians, including Lake Simcoe and the Great Lakes and here in Waterloo Region we are even more vulnerable with such a dependence on groundwater and the Grand River for all our water needs.
* Bill 66 repeals the **Toxics Reduction Act** meant to to prevent pollution and protect human health and the environment by reducing the use and creation of prescribed toxic substances and to inform Ontarians about prescribed toxic substances. It also positioned Ontario's manufacturing and mineral processing sectors to compete in an increasingly green global economy. What good can come from repealing this Act?
* Polling consistently shows extremely strong support for the Greenbelt with more than **93% of Waterloo Region respondents agreeing that the Greenbelt and protection of rural land is one of the most important initiatives** for the future of the province, helping to protect farmland, rural communities, water sources, and natural greenspace.
* **Your government did not get elected on this platform.** After hearing from Ontarians that they did not want to see the Greenbelt threatened by development, your government wisely promised not to touch that land. Now, Ontarians want to see that commitment upheld.

**Talking Points for Phone Calls and Meetings with Municipal Councillors:**

* **The people you represent care deeply about protecting our farms, drinking water, natural ecosystems, and smart urban development.**
* Waterloo Region and our area municipalities have demonstrated continued leadership with numerous environmental protection initiatives pioneered and launched here including **Environmentally Sensitive Protected Areas (ESPA’s)** in the 1970’s, the concept of **Blue Box Recycling** in the 1980’s, our visionary **Regional Official Plan** in the 1990’s, the **Countryside Line** concept, **Protected Countryside** designation and **Environmentally Sensitive Landscape (ESL)** concept in the 2000’s.
* We expect our municipalities to work with other local governments and the province to **fully protect the Waterloo Moraine and Paris-Galt Moraines** as these are crucial groundwater recharge areas
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* Bill 66 repeals the **Toxics Reduction Act** meant to to prevent pollution and protect human health and the environment by reducing the use and creation of prescribed toxic substances and to inform Ontarians about prescribed toxic substances. Given our Elmira water situation we are especially concerned about toxins in our local ecosystems.
* As a municipal councillor, you need to **stop the provincial government from interfering in local decision-making and disrupting the proven regulatory and planning systems already in place**. Bill 66 imposes the provincial government’s political agenda on municipal decisions and under the guise of empowering local councils actually does the opposite requiring the Minister to be involved in every decision under this Bill.
* By refusing to develop on the protected lands, you can help **keep municipal planning free from politics and undue influence from business** while helping to keep our communities safe for generations to come.