

A Message to our fellow Greenbelt Supporters,

Yesterday's report by the Auditor General about the Greenbelt land grab is truly unprecedented.

Never has so much wealth been transferred through a land-use policy in this country: with the stroke of a pen, a few privileged developers gained \$8.3 billion!

And all this without any due process, without any consideration of the impact on the environment and farming. And all done in secrecy, knowing full well that there is enough land for housing already.

As a leader on the Greenbelt for almost 20 years, I now realize that we didn't make the Greenbelt Act strong enough.

We didn't put in place enough rules, guardrails and procedures to make an assault on the Greenbelt virtually impossible.

Maybe we made a mistake in not requiring public hearings under the Act when changes to the Greenbelt boundary were up for consideration. Maybe we made a mistake in even permitting changes to the Greenbelt in the Act.

But if what was revealed yesterday by the Auditor General tells us one thing, it's this: that mistake is not destiny.

When the AG revealed that most of the land wasn't just handed over to a few developers by politicians and their staff, but ordered by them at a private dinner, she told us that the fight is anything but over.

The facts are so strong, the collusion so wide, the disregard of any "environmental, agricultural and infrastructure considerations" so blatant, that the decision to move forward with the land grab simply will not stand with the public.

Indeed, an Environics poll released yesterday by our partner the *Alliance for a Liveable Ontario* showed:

“...83% of Ontarians believe there is no need to build housing on the Greenbelt and farmland to solve Ontario's housing challenges, because there is enough land already available in existing towns and cities.”

Perhaps even more remarkable is that 76% of 2022 Conservative voters agree with this statement. And the number of Ontarians who trust the opinion of Premier Doug Ford on housing? Just 10%.

Twenty years ago, we who fought for the Greenbelt Act trusted that governments wouldn't overrule an incredibly, even uniquely, popular policy like the Greenbelt. But we never imagined a government like this.

We won't make that mistake again. We have been fighting the removal of these Greenbelt lands since November. The report from the AG provides essential fuel to reignite our fight to keep the Greenbelt whole with new strategies and new conviction. We know the size and scale — and audacity — of the machine we are up against. And we need more help than ever to fight it.

Now is the time to act, while the light of the report is shining on the bias, hastiness and political manipulation of the Greenbelt annexation, and the population is united in its opposition.

It's not over, not by a long shot.

We have a ton of fight left in us.

With warm wishes,
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