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ENVIRONMENT north

COMMENTS re **Consultation: A made-in-Ontario climate change plan**

Dear Reader

Environment North submitted comments regarding **Bill 4, the Cap and Trade Cancellation Act, 2018** on October 11, 2018. I have included these at the end of this current discussion.

In the following comments regarding “A made-in-Ontario climate change plan” I have highlighted **in yellow** direct questions to the government. Could you please arrange for meaningful responses to these questions.

Ontario and the world are increasingly feeling the detrimental impacts of climate change. The latest United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report has stated unequivocally the urgency of action. **Does the Ford government take United Nations report at all seriously?**

The wording and layout of this request for “a made-in-Ontario climate change plan” suggest no urgency and the “broader approach that will protect clean air and water, encourage conservation and do more to address urban litter and waste” downplays and clutters this “Consultation” process. It suggests an attempt to stall climate policy, a variation of climate change denial. The present time of frequent severe weather events: four hurricanes with damages in the United States exceeding \$100 Billion US in damage (since Donald Trump was elected), record wild fires in British Columbia and now in California puts the present United governments, USA and Ontario, in an awkward position.

The threats of climate change and related extreme weather in Ontario is not hypothetical in a vague future — it is quantifiable. The Insurance Bureau of Canada provides annual summaries of catastrophic losses resulting from severe weather events. Insured losses for a given disaster are considered catastrophic when they total \$25 million or more. Your staff should compile numbers and costs over time. This would reveal an exponential increase over the past 35 years. We have compiled a brief summary for Ontario from 2013 to the present.

Year	No. of events	Cost	Remarks
2013	4	\$1198 million	Toronto \$982 million (Flooding/Lightning/Water)
2014	3	216 million	Various Flooding/Hail/Lightning/Water
2015	1	30 million	Flooding/Windstorm/Lightning/Water
2016	4	Claims not complete	Flooding/Hail/Windstorm/Water
2017	5	Claims not complete	Flooding/Hail/Windstorm/Water
2018	Estimated to exceed \$1 billion		

Source: Insurance Bureau of Canada 40th edition, 2018 ISSN 1197 3404

List of severe weather events in Ontario from January to early August, 2018:

- January: A winter storm in northern, southwestern and eastern Ontario caused \$9 million in insured damage
- February: A winter storm in Brantford, Cambridge, the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and London caused over \$46 million in insured damage
- April: A storm in southern Ontario resulted in over \$80 million in insured damage
- April: A storm that hit the GTA, Leamington, Hamilton, Kitchener/Guelph/Waterloo, London/Chatham-Kent and Ottawa-Gatineau resulted in close to \$220 million in insured damage
- May: A wind and rain storm hit Hamilton and the GTA, causing over \$500 million in insured damage
- August: This rainstorm in Toronto resulted in over \$80 million in insured damage.

Source: Insurance Bureau of Canada <https://www.canadianunderwriter.ca/catastrophes/ontario-already-near-1-billion-insured-damage-2018-1004136772/>

Note: The above numbers are for “insured” losses. Actual losses are typically nearly three times these amounts.

Please send details of which Ministries are tracking and projecting these losses.

We opened these comments with concerns that this government request for a “A made-in-Ontario climate change plan” does not indicate sincerity about tackling climate change. The announcement that the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario position is being eliminated is shocking. This office reported regularly on details of the Ontario government’s climate performance in the past.

The costs, both financial and human, are increasing. Please surprise us all with a brilliant effective climate plan soon!

COMMENTS on Bill 4, the Cap and Trade Cancellation Act, 2018

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Introduction to Environment North

Since 1972, Environment North has functioned as a regional coalition promoting sustainable communities and conservation of our resources. Environment North is a registered charitable organisation.

Environment North has played a significant role in many regional environment issues and policy change over the decades.

Since 2006 most of our efforts have been devoted to improving public awareness of human caused climate change and promoting clean, low-carbon energy.

Activities include:

- Public conferences
- Public and school film presentations
- Seminars
- Green loan program with a local credit union,
- Newspaper articles
- Participation in government consultations

Climate policies of the Ontario Government

“Bill 4 repeals the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act, 2016 and provides for **various matters** related to the wind down of the Cap and Trade Program. It also establishes a requirement for the Minister to prepare **a climate change plan** and to prepare progress reports in respect of the plan.” (Source: https://www.ola.org/sites/default/files/node-files/bill/document/pdf/2018/2018-07/b004_e.pdf, underlines are our added emphasis)

We are shocked by the intent and wording of Bill 4: *An Act respecting the preparation of a climate change plan, providing for the wind down of the cap and trade program and repealing the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act, 2016*, presented by the Hon. R. Phillips Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks on July 25, 2018.

“Various matters” and “a climate change plan”

In the six pages of content the bill contains definitions, discussion about what is being cancelled and details about compensation. However, “**a climate change plan**” is only mentioned and rates only 26 words:

“The Minister, with the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, shall prepare a climate change plan and may revise the plan from time to time”. (Source: https://www.ola.org/sites/default/files/node-files/bill/document/pdf/2018/2018-07/b004_e.pdf)

This ignores or downplays observed and projected damage because of climate change in Ontario. Such a bill within another ministry can be compared to shutting down a high school or hospital with a few months notice with the promise to find a plan in the indefinite future.

This dismissal or downplay of climate change is very similar to Mr. Trump’s actions to “make America great again” by relaxing greenhouse gas emission standards. Trump policies mock the Paris Accord attempting to limit warming to 1.5 °C or 2.0° C compared to pre-industrial levels.

Ontario and the world is increasingly feeling the detrimental impacts of climate change. The latest United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report has stated unequivocally the urgency of action. The Ontario Government should withdraw this bill and ensure the province is undertaking all measures to meet the targets necessary for limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Graham Saunders,
President, Environment North