

May 27th, 2019

The Honourable Rod Phillips
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
777 Bay Street, College Park, 5th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2T5

Ontario Suffers without the independent Office of the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario

Dear Minister Phillips,

Ontario is home to over 87,000 Professional Engineers and 250,000 engineering graduates. That's one of the largest concentrations of engineering expertise in the world and the largest concentration of engineering expertise in Canada—and OSPE stands as their advocacy body.

OSPE is the voice of the entire engineering community in Ontario, including professional engineers, engineering graduates and students who work or will work in the most strategic sectors of our provincial economy.

OSPE is deeply concerned with the government's decision to eliminate the Office of the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (ECO). For over 25 years, the ECO has helped successive provincial governments by advising them and their leaders, with sound-evidence and data, on best practices to safeguard the environment.

Ontario has one of the richest natural and environmental legacies in the world. Ensuring the environment's sustainability and health is critically important to Ontario's identity, culture and economy.

The ECO has been characterized as an independent, non-partisan body that has produced numerous in-depth reports on several key issues affecting Ontario, from energy to climate change. A body such as the ECO is vital in highlighting whether government policies and programs are having a positive outcome on our environment. All Ontarians are better off with the existence of the Office of the Environmental Commissioner.

OSPE and its membership base truly values the importance of an independent office that reports on government progress on climate change, energy and other environmental issues. OSPE has had the opportunity of working with both the Environmental Commissioner and the Auditor General, and we believe the environment would be better safeguarded under the watch of an independent office such as the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario.

Ontario's professional engineers are experienced at and knowledgeable about reducing carbon emissions and protecting public safety and the environment, in almost every sector of Ontario's economy, including historical achievements in Ontario's clean electricity system. Engineers are world class optimizers and problem solvers who understand how to develop efficient systems that most effectively combat climate change while respecting tax dollars, protecting jobs and growing the economy.

If the government follows evidence-based practices and takes appropriate action with the environment, it can help Ontarians save money, reduce climate damage and increased their health and long-term well being.

We support decision makers at all levels of government to advance evidence-based, technically sound policy recommendations.

We stand to work with you and your government to deliver on your vision of growth, prosperity, and a cleaner environment for the benefit of all Ontarians.

Sincerely,



Dr. Tibor Turi, P.Eng.
President and Chair
Ontario Society of Professional Engineers



Sandro Perruzza
Chief Executive Officer
Ontario Society of Professional Engineers