

November 27, 2019

The Editor
Ontario Farmer
Box 4700
London, Ontario
N3Y 4X3

RE: Letters – 1996 merger of farms not relayed – Grant and Karen Campbell

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), I wish to thank Mr. and Mrs. Campbell for raising the issue of “merged titles” in their letter to the editor in the October 29, 2019 edition of the Ontario Farmer. Mr. and Mrs. Campbell are not alone in dealing with this issue. Many farmers have been equally shocked to find out that two farm properties they own had been merged without any notification.

This unacceptable situation was discussed in great detail at the OFA’s Convention and Annual General Meeting in 2014. OFA Delegates passed a resolution calling on the Ontario Government to change the Land Registry System under the Planning Act so that the practice of automatic merging be discontinued and those mergers are only considered upon application by the affected parties.

Despite best efforts, the Ontario government has been slow to address this issue; until now. On March 25, 2019, the Honourable Doug Downey (MPP for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte) introduced Bill 88 in the legislature to amend the Planning Act. This Bill would allow the original lot fabric to be kept in the case of lots that merged due to the death of an adjoining joint owner.

In his comments as Bill 88 was moved to second reading on May 30, 2019, The Honourable Downey stated:

“I have the support of the County of Carleton Law Association, the Insurance Bureau of Canada, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and several other organizations, because it’s solving problems that don’t need to exist in the first place.”

Bill 88 has now been referred to the legislature’s Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. OFA encourages all Ontario farmers to write the Clerk of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs to request that the Committee hold public hearings on Bill 88 as soon as possible, so that Bill 88 is not delayed.

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Letters can be directed to:

Julia Douglas
Clerk - Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
99 Wellesley Street West
Room 1405
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1A2
Email: comm-financeaffairs@ola.org
Fax: 1-416-325-3505

OFA would appreciate being copied on the letters sent to the Committee so OFA can reference them in our further advocacy efforts on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Currie', written in a cursive style.

Keith Currie
President

cc: The Honourable Doug Downey, Minister of the Attorney General