

November 21, 2025

Local Government Policy Branch
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Toronto, ON
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Submitted via website and Localgov@ontario.ca

To whom it may concern,

RE: Bill 60 - Schedule 16 Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025, and

ERO 025-1098: Proposed amendments to the Municipal Act, 2001 to transfer jurisdiction over water and wastewater to the lower-tier municipalities in Peel Region and a standalone statute to authorize the establishment of water and wastewater public corporations

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture is dedicated to ensuring that the agri-food sector and rural communities are considered and consulted with on issues, legislation and regulations that would impact the sustainability and growth of our farm businesses. OFA appreciates this opportunity to provide input on the consultation regarding the establishment of water and wastewater public corporations.

OFA has significant concerns with the proposed establishment of water and wastewater public corporations. Of most significance is the outstanding questions of the potential impact of these proposed corporations with respect to the *Drainage Act*.

Section 3 of the proposed act states:

Once a water and wastewater public corporation has been designated for particular lower-tier municipalities, the municipalities shall provide water and sewage services only through that water and wastewater public corporation as of the date prescribed by the regulations.

The definition of “sewage” for this proposed act comes from the *Municipal Act* which includes “storm water and other drainage from land...”.

Also, this proposed act prevails if there is conflict between it and any other Act or regulation.

This raises significant concerns regarding the application of the *Drainage Act* to manage “sewage services” if they can only be provided through this corporation. **OFA is opposed to any legislation that could potentially override Ontario’s *Drainage Act*.** There is a need to establish both the primacy of the *Drainage Act*, and how a proposed water / wastewater corporation may function under the *Drainage Act*. Furthermore, this proposed public corporation must be directed that any landowner paying into a drainage works subject to the *Drainage Act* cannot be subject to additional wastewater or stormwater management fees. They are already paying for this service through the *Drainage Act*.

It is essential that any such corporations **remain fully public utilities, entirely within public ownership with no private ownership or control**, ensuring that the provision of water and wastewater services continues to prioritize community needs, transparency, and accountability, over private or profit-driven objectives.

Further, OFA believes participation in these corporations should remain **voluntary for municipalities**, allowing local governments to determine whether creation of a public corporation for water and wastewater services is the best approach for their community's unique circumstances.

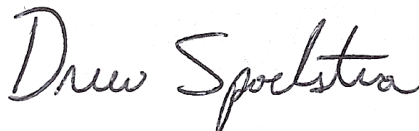
The obligation for water and wastewater public corporations to be subject to, and to comply with, the *Drainage Act* must be explicitly included in the primary legislation, rather than being deferred to regulation. Furthermore, there must be a clear legislative commitment to amend the *Drainage Act* and any associated regulations as necessary to ensure that the roles, responsibilities, and obligations of public corporations under the Act are explicitly defined and consistently applied.

OFA also emphasizes the importance of establishing a **clear and effective framework for accountability and issue resolution**. This framework should provide mechanisms through which decisions can be reviewed, corrected, and improved where necessary. Such mechanisms would help ensure that stakeholders can work constructively with the corporation to address concerns, rectify errors and maintain public confidence. **One need only to look at the mishandling of the application of excessive, unjustifiable stormwater management fees on agricultural lands by some municipalities to understand this need.**

OFA recommends that this initiative proceed initially as a **pilot project with the Cities of Mississauga, Brampton, and the Region of Peel**, before considering a broader rollout across the province. A pilot approach would allow the government and participating municipalities to assess operational, financial, and governance considerations, and to incorporate lessons learned into future phases of the program.

OFA appreciates the opportunity to contribute to this important consultation and would welcome further engagement as the proposal advances.

Sincerely,



Drew Spoelstra
President

cc: Hon. Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Hon. Trevor Jones, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness
OFA Board of Directors

This submission has been approved by the OFA Board of Directors and will be posted to OFA's website: <https://ofa.on.ca/resources/>