



**Town of Aurora  
Special Meeting of Council  
Revised Agenda**

**Date:** Tuesday, July 15, 2025  
**Time:** 5 p.m.  
**Location:** Council Chambers, Aurora Town Hall

Meetings are available to the public in person and via live stream on the [Town's YouTube channel](#).  
To participate, please visit [aurora.ca/participation](http://aurora.ca/participation).

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	<b>Pages</b>
<b>1. Call to Order</b>	
This meeting has been called in accordance with section 21(b)(ii) of the Town of Aurora <u>Procedure By-law No. 6228-19</u> .	
Note: Added items are marked with an asterisk (*).	
<b>2. Land Acknowledgement</b>	
<b>3. Approval of the Agenda</b>	
<b>4. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof</b>	
<b>5. Delegations</b>	
5.1 Kathy Duncan, Climate Action Newmarket-Aurora; Re: Opposition to Provincial Bills 5 and 17	1
*5.2 David Heard, Resident; Re: Provincial Bill 5	2
<b>6. Consent Agenda</b>	
That the Consent Agenda, items 6.1 to 6.3 inclusive, be received for information.	
6.1 Correspondence from Mayor Mrakas; Re: Ontario Bills 5 and 17	3
1. That the correspondence from Mayor Mrakas regarding Ontario Bills 5 and 17 be received for information.	
6.2 Correspondence from Councillor Weese; Re: Ontario Bills 5 and 17	4
1. That the correspondence from Councillor Weese regarding	

Ontario Bills 5 and 17 be received for information.

**\*6.3 Correspondence from Climate Action Newmarket-Aurora; Re: Urgent Concerns About Ontario Provincial Bill 5** 6

1. That the correspondence from Climate Action Newmarket-Aurora regarding Urgent Concerns About Ontario Provincial Bill 5 be received for information.

**7. Consideration of Items Requiring Discussion**

**7.1 Member Motion - Councillor Weese; Re: Opposition to Bill 5, Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025** 21

1. Now Therefore Be It Hereby Resolved That Aurora Town Council officially opposes Bill 5 in its current form as it interferes with local planning authorities, limits public consultation, and threatens both heritage designations and endangered species; and
2. Be It Further Resolved That this Motion be forwarded to all 444 Ontario Municipalities, Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, and Hon. Stephen Lecce, Ontario Minister of Energy and Mines.

**7.2 Member Motion - Councillor Weese; Re: Opposition to Bill 17, Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025** 22

1. Now Therefore Be It Hereby Resolved That Aurora Town Council officially opposes Ontario Bill 17 in its current form, and recommends;
  - Restoring municipal autonomy, and ensuring meaningful consultation and decision-making power;
  - Maintaining rigorous environmental, safety, and heritage assessments despite expedited timelines;
  - Incorporating clear affordable housing requirements within new developments;
  - Enhancing transparency, public engagement and accountability mechanisms;
  - Ensuring climate change mitigation is included in all development projects; and
2. Be It Further Resolved That this Motion be forwarded to all 444 Ontario Municipalities, Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, and Hon. Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

**8. Confirming By-law**

**8.1 By-law Number XXXX-25 - Being a By-law to confirm actions by Council  
resulting from a Special Meeting of Council on July 15, 2025**

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**9. Adjournment**

# Delegation Request

This request and any written submissions or background information for consideration by either Council or Committees of Council is being submitted to Legislative Services.

**Council or Committee (Choose One) \***

Council

**Council or Committee Meeting Date \* ?**

2025-7-15



**Subject \***

Opposition to provincial bills 5 and 17

**Full Name of Spokesperson and Name of Group or Person(s) being Represented (if applicable) \***

Kathy Duncan - Climate Action Newmarket-Aurora

**Brief Summary of Issue or Purpose of Delegation \***

Climate Action Newmarket-Aurora supports the Council of the Town of Aurora in opposing the provincially passed bill 5 (Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025) and bill 17 (Protect Ontario by Building Smarter and Faster Act, 2025). I intend to outline our rationale for opposition.

**Have you been in contact with a Town staff or Council member regarding your matter of interest? \***

☒ Yes

☐ No

**Full name of the Town staff or Council member with whom you spoke**

Councillor Ron Weese

**Date you spoke with Town staff or a Council member**

2025-7-7



**I acknowledge that the Procedure By-law permits five (5) minutes for Delegations. \***

☒ Agree

**I acknowledge that I understand and accept the delegate conduct expectations as outlined in Section 32(b) of the Procedure By-law 6228-19, as amended (link below) \***

☒ Agree

[Click to view Procedure By-law 6228-19, as amended.](#)

# Delegation Request

This request and any written submissions or background information for consideration by either Council or Committees of Council is being submitted to Legislative Services.

**Council or Committee (Choose One) \***

Council

**Council or Committee Meeting Date \* ?**

2025-7-15



**Subject \***

Bill 5

**Full Name of Spokesperson and Name of Group or Person(s) being Represented (if applicable) \***

David Heard

**Brief Summary of Issue or Purpose of Delegation \***

Concerns of our valued heritage.

**Have you been in contact with a Town staff or Council member regarding your matter of interest? \***

☒ Yes

☐ No

**Full name of the Town staff or Council member with whom you spoke**

Ron Weese / Adam Robb

**Date you spoke with Town staff or a Council member**

2025-7-3



**I acknowledge that the Procedure By-law permits five (5) minutes for Delegations. \***

☒ Agree

**I acknowledge that I understand and accept the delegate conduct expectations as outlined in Section 32(b) of the Procedure By-law 6228-19, as amended (link below) \***

☒ Agree

[Click to view Procedure By-law 6228-19, as amended.](#)



## TOM MRAKAS MAYOR

July 7, 2025

Members of Council,

As Mayor of Aurora and a member of the AMO Board, I want to offer some perspective on Bills 5 and 17.

These are substantial and complex pieces of legislation. While there are certainly elements within each bill that raise legitimate concerns—particularly regarding municipal autonomy and long-term fiscal sustainability—there are also parts that, if implemented collaboratively and thoughtfully, could offer real benefits for Ontario's communities.

Importantly, both bills have now received Royal Assent, which means they have passed into law. Additionally, all public commenting periods are now closed. The next phase—the one that truly determines how these laws will function—is the development and release of the regulations, which are still to come.

To bring forward two motions to oppose these bills in their entirety now—after the legislation has passed and the consultation period has ended—is both pointless and moot. It serves no constructive purpose and does nothing to influence the process that's already underway.

That's why almost all municipalities have taken a measured approach, rather than opposing the bills outright. There's good reason for this. AMO has clearly stated that while some aspects of the legislation require clarification and adjustment, other proposals—like Development Charge modernization in Bill 17 and Special Economic Zones in Bill 5—could help drive local economic growth if municipalities are full partners in the process.

The reality is, these are framework bills, not finished products. The regulations that will define their real-world impacts have not yet been released. Even our municipal staff do not fully know what the implications will be. Unlike more straightforward bills—such as the reversal of tribunal rules—Bills 5 and 17 are layered, far-reaching, and depend heavily on how the regulations are written. Anyone claiming to know exactly how these will play out is not being truthful—because even the Province has acknowledged those details are still in development.

As a member of the AMO Board—representing 444 municipalities across Ontario—I believe it is premature and irresponsible to oppose these bills in their entirety before understanding the full regulatory framework. AMO's position is clear: if the Province works with municipalities, many of the potential risks can be mitigated. Acting in opposition now, before those opportunities to collaborate have been exhausted, risks losing influence over how the final regulations are shaped.

I remain hopeful that through open, ongoing dialogue with the Province—and by continuing to advocate for practical, transparent, and community-focused regulations—we can help shape outcomes that work for everyone and ensure Aurora has a meaningful voice in the decisions ahead.

In the meantime, I will not support the motions calling for opposition to both Bills 5 and 17 in their entirety, which are being brought forward at the July Council meeting requested by the four members of Council. I believe the more responsible and constructive course of action is for our Town to stand with AMO and support their detailed, thoughtful submissions.

I will continue to monitor developments closely, work collaboratively with our municipal partners and AMO, and respond in a way that is informed, balanced, and focused on real outcomes. I will always stand for Aurora and our best interests. We have led on many issues before—and this will be no different.

That is what leadership requires—and what our residents deserve.

Mayor Tom Mrakas

AURORA TOWN HALL



July 7, 2025

Mayor Mrakas and Members of Council,

At the June 10th Committee of the Whole, a Delegate asked for the Town to officially oppose both Ontario Bill 5 and 17 officially. At the June 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee, which I Chair, the Committee highlighted Provincial Bill 5 and its potential to negatively impact the environment, through amending and/or repealing the Endangered Species Act, 2007 and the Environmental Assessment Act.

The Special Meeting of Council scheduled for July 15, 2025, is timely and will allow Council to publicly discuss and debate these Bills and formulate a measured Aurora response for consideration. It is what diligent Councils do for their municipalities.

**Ontario Bill 5 “Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act, 2025”** achieved third reading and Royal Assent on June 5<sup>th</sup> after only a 49-day journey through the legislature when a closure motion on June 3 curtailed further debate, streamlining the process to final approval. While legally enacted, municipal resistance, accompanied by environmental groups, have raised questions aimed at challenging or modifying this legislation. Municipal concerns have been identified from the Bill’s provisions to reduce regulatory barriers, expedite development, and centralize provincial authority remain. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) expressed cautious support for Bill 5’s goal to speed up development, provided municipalities have meaningful input on Special Economic Zones (SEZ). In its May 26 submission, AMO urged that SEZ’s override local bylaws **only** with host municipal support and **only** in extraordinary circumstances, and insisted on preserving environmental protections, including species-at-risk safeguards, and upholding Indigenous rights. AMO’s position, urges care to ensure local voices and ecological responsibilities aren’t sidelined, nor undermines our Official Plan.

**Ontario Bill 17, called the *Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025***, is narrowly focused on construction standards and amends the Building Code Act to centralize authority for all building performance regulations at the provincial level. The Bill was sent directly to third reading without committee or public hearings, with minimal debate or stakeholder input. From introduction (May 12) to becoming law (June 5), Bill 17 advanced through all legislative stages in just 24 days. It received Royal Assent before the public consultation period had closed, underscoring its unusually swift and streamlined passage. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) has stated in their submission to the Environmental Registry of Ontario that, *‘While we are supportive of efforts to standardize and streamline planning to help drive development, careful consideration needs to be given to the changes made under Bill 17 and proposed for further consultation .’* AMO looks forward to collaborating with the province to help bring municipal stakeholders and perspectives forward during consultation’. Municipal issues remain, such as undermining environmental protections for endangered species, the

tree canopy and flood resistance. It also threatens accessibility standards by preventing municipalities from requiring enhanced accessible building standards.

Advocacy for a balanced approach is needed that respects local governance and ensures that rapid growth does not come at the expense of livable, resilient, and accessible communities that respect heritage in both the built form and the environment. In Aurora we want to make things happen rather than watch or wonder what happened.

**A Special Meeting of Council is being held on July 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss the implications of these Bills on our municipality and formulate a measured response that reflects our Council's commitment to controlled growth, accessibility and environmental and heritage protection that relies on made-in-Aurora solutions. To do otherwise would abdicate Council's responsibility to our residents by meekly accepting terms of these two important Bills that affect us without comment.**

Sincerely,

Councillor Ron Weese  
Ward 1 Councillor  
365-500-3090  
rweese@aurora.ca



**Provincial Bill 5 ‘Protect Ontario By Unleashing Our Economy Act’ and all 10 related Schedules and ERO notices.**

**Subject:** Urgent Concerns About Ontario Provincial Bill 5

To: Premier Ford, Minister of Energy and Mining, MPP Lecce, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, MPP McCarthy, Minister of Indigenous Affairs, MPP Rickford, and Minister of Transportation, MPP Sarkaria.

Cc. Leader of the Opposition Marit Stiles, Opposition Critic Energy and Climate Action MPP Tabuns, Opposition Critic of Indigenous and Treaty Relations & Northern Development, MP Sol Mamakwa, Leader of the Green Party MPP Schreiner, and Leader of the Liberal party, Bonnie Crombie.

Cc. Federal Minister of the Energy, and Natural Resources, MP Wilkinson, Federal Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, MP Duguid, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, MP Thompson, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Minister, MP Anandasangaree and Minister of Canadian Culture and Identity, Parks Canada and Quebec Lieutenant, MP Steven Guilbeault

Cc. Municipal Councils of Newmarket and Aurora (via Town Clerk)

Premier Ford and Ministers Lecce, Rickford and Sarkaria:

Climate Action Newmarket Aurora is sending this correspondence as a concerned association which supports responsible growth but not at the expense of Indigenous rights, the environment, climate action, or democratic accountability.

We all want a thriving Ontario, and we must have ‘elbows up’ in the face of economic pressure from the U.S. But Bill 5, the *Protecting Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act*, raises serious red flags. It goes too far, too fast - drastically reducing public and scientific consultation, gutting protections for endangered species and the environment, sidelining Indigenous voices on issues that directly affect their lands and heritage, and will impact the climate crisis in a negative way despite the intent to provide the resources to support positive climate energy action.

Ontario should push for critical minerals, clean energy, active transit infrastructure, and green SEZs but it must include First Nations as equal partners - not silent observers. These priorities must not come at the cost of species extinction, the elimination of environmental assessments during the climate crisis, or stripping the public of legal recourse.

The Endangered Species Act and environmental assessments must not be replaced by the weaker Conservation Act. They must be strengthened, not sacrificed.

Though the bill's title implies economic protection, its contents reveal a different agenda - one that centralizes power, reduces oversight, and favors unchecked development over nature, rights, and accountability.

Alternatives for Sustainable Growth:

- **Fast-Track Low-Impact Projects:** Expedite approvals for developments that meet pre-approved environmental standards.
- **Green-Focused SEZs:** Designate zones for clean tech and sustainable innovation, with incentives tied to environmental performance.
- **Mandatory Indigenous and Community Consultation:** Require consultation for major projects, especially in SEZs and areas like Ontario Place.
- **Strengthen the Endangered Species Act:** Modernize with adaptive management and developer partnerships to protect habitats.
- **Expand Conservation Programs:** Support habitat restoration and community-led stewardship through public-private partnerships.
- **Clear Criteria for Exemptions:** Apply only to projects with net environmental benefit. Create a “green certification” for high-standard developers.
- **Public Project Dashboard:** Ensure real-time transparency on assessments, consultations, and project status.
- **Reform, Don't Eliminate, Legal Appeals:** Improve access and transparency while preventing abuse, especially for cases affecting health or environmental justice.

Climate Action Newmarket Aurora urges you to press pause on Bill 5. Reopen meaningful consultation with scientists, Indigenous communities, and the public. Let's advance Ontario's economy without sacrificing what makes this province worth protecting. With collaboration and care, we can build a future that leaves no voice or ecosystem behind and stands strong.

Sincerely,

Melanie Duckett-Wilson

On behalf of Climate Action Newmarket Aurora

[www.climateactionna.org](http://www.climateactionna.org)

[climateaction.newmarketaurora@gmail.com](mailto:climateaction.newmarketaurora@gmail.com)



ERO notices:

<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-0416>

<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-0418>

<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-0380>

<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-0409>

<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-0389>

<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-0391>

<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-0380>

## Climate Action Newmarket Aurora - Response to proposed Bill 5

Initial public consultation concerns:

- Proposed Bill 5, “Protecting Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act” is split into 10 different schedules and whereby some schedules have a different ERO reference number of input and others do not (Schedules 1, 4 & 8)
- ERO numbers for response, all due at the same time, May 17, 2025 - 30 days in this instance doesn't allow for adequate public stakeholder input given the range and depth of the proposed legislative changes.
- Given the haste with which all the components of this Bill have been put together, there should be serious concern about how much expert and scientific consultation was sought as part of the preparation process.

## Summary of Ontario's Legislative Changes (10 Schedules, 2025)

These are the potential benefits the province is looking to secure:

- **Faster Project Approvals**, especially in **Special Economic Zones** and **Ontario Place**.
- **Streamlined Energy Procurement** allows the government to prioritize local or aligned suppliers in energy projects of its choosing.
- **Flexible Development Tools** allows the government to **modify or exempt regulations** in priority zones

**Key Concerns If Implemented - the 'not-so-hidden' cost:**

- **Environmental Oversight Weakened:**  
Several laws now **limit or bypass public consultation**, especially under the **Environmental Bill of Rights**. This reduces transparency and accountability.
- **Species Protections Rolled Back:**  
The new **Species Conservation Act** replaces the stronger **Endangered Species Act**, softening legal protections and enabling more development in sensitive habitats.
- **Indigenous Rights Overlooked:**  
Though artifacts may be returned to Indigenous communities, the broader exemption powers and lack of consultation could **undermine Indigenous stewardship** of land and heritage.

- **Erosion of Democratic Participation:**  
Legal rights to **comment, appeal, or sue** over environmental and development decisions are restricted or extinguished in several areas, **limiting public and legal recourse**.

## BREAKDOWN OF EACH SCHEDULE

### Schedule 1 025-0416 [Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act, 2025](#).

#### Key Concerns: IESO is no longer INDEPENDENT

1. **Government Can Control Who Gets Energy Contracts:** The government can now tell Ontario's electricity authority (the IESO) to give contracts for energy projects (like building power plants or buying electricity) based on where the goods or services come from
2. **Limits on What Contracts the IESO Can Make:** The government can also create rules that stop the IESO from making certain contracts for electricity projects, depending on the situation.
3. **The IESO Can't Buy Things Outside Electricity Unless Allowed:** The IESO isn't allowed to buy goods or services that aren't directly related to electricity—unless the government makes specific exceptions in the rules.
4. **Restrictions on Ontario Power Generation (OPG):** OPG and its subsidiaries may also face new rules about what they can buy, based on where those goods or services come from
5. **No Lawsuits Allowed:** A new rule says people can't sue the government, IESO, or OPG over anything connected to these new amendments even if a legitimate wrong was done.

**In short:** The government has more control over who gets energy contracts, allows them to block certain deals, and protects themselves and energy companies from being sued thereby explicitly denying any liability for these decisions.

### Schedule 2 ERO 025-0380 – [Proposed interim changes to the Endangered Species Act, 2007 and a proposal for the Species Conservation Act, 2025 | Environmental Registry of Ontario](#)

The Ontario government is proposing major changes to the **Endangered Species Act, 2007**, and many of them reduce protections for at-risk wildlife and give the government more control over decisions.

#### Key Concerns:

1. **Weakened Purpose of the Act:** The overall *goal of the Act is being changed*, which could shift the focus away from strong protection of species at risk.
2. **Redefining “Habitat”** (s. 2(1)): The definition of what counts as a species’ “habitat” is being updated, which could narrow what areas get protected.
3. **Minister Can Delegate Power** (s. 2.1): The Minister of the Environment can now *hand over their powers to others*, potentially reducing oversight.
4. **Listing of Species is No Longer Automatic** (s. 7):
  - Right now, species assessed as endangered or threatened by COSSARO (the expert science committee) *must* be listed and protected.
  - Under the changes, the government *can choose* whether or not to list those species (s. 7(1)).
  - If a species is removed from the list, its protections *immediately end* (s. 7(3)).
5. **Immediate Protections Removed:** Species that get listed will *no longer get automatic, temporary protection* while full regulations are developed.
6. **Removal of Response Plans and Agreements:** The government will *no longer be required to create action plans or agreements* to help species recover.
7. **Easier to Approve Harmful Activities** (s. 17): The rules are changed so permits to damage or destroy species or their habitats *can be granted more easily*, with fewer conditions.
  - a. **Hearings Eliminated** (s. 20 & 30): The right to a hearing on certain species-related decisions is being replaced with a more limited appeals process.
8. **End of Species Protection Fund** (s. 20.3): The flow of money into the fund used for species recovery is being stopped.
9. **Agency Wind-Down** (s. 20.19): The agency that helps implement the Act will be shut down.
10. **New Powers to Demand Info** (s. 22.1): People must now *answer questions* from government officials to check if they’re following the rules.
11. **More Inspections, Less Oversight:** Officials can now inspect without a warrant in more cases.
12. **Shift in Enforcement Powers:** Stop orders are removed, and new orders like *mitigation orders* are added, giving more control to the Minister and provincial officers.
13. **Advisory Committees Removed:** The Minister is no longer required to set up advisory groups with experts.
14. **Special Regulation Requirements Repealed** (s. 57): Rules that made it harder to weaken protections through regulations are gone.
15. **Schedules Repealed:** Schedules 1 to 5, which included lists of species and habitat details, are being removed.

**In short:**

Endangered and at-risk species and the avenues to protect them have been dismantled in order to facilitate development.

**Schedule 3 ERO 0259-** Environmental Assessment Act [Removing Environmental Assessment Requirements for the York1 Waste Disposal Site Project](#)

This part of the legislation changes how environmental assessments (EAs) are handled for certain major projects in Ontario, and weakens oversight in key cases:

1. **Cancels Environmental Oversight for the Eagle's Nest Mine (s. 3.0.1) ERO 025-0396:**

The government is *terminating a special environmental agreement* that applied to the **Eagle's Nest multi-metal mine** near McFaulds Lake in Northern Ontario (Ring of Fire region).

- A related **approval under the Environmental Assessment Act is also being revoked**, meaning the project no longer has to meet those EA requirements.

2. **Exempts Chatham-Kent Waste Project from Assessment ERO 025-0389 (Part II.3):**

Under **Part II.3** of the Act, big projects usually have to get approval from the Minister before moving ahead. But the **Chatham-Kent waste disposal site** does not..

**In short:**

The government is letting major industrial projects—like a large mine in Northern Ontario and a waste disposal site in Chatham-Kent to *bypass normal environmental assessment processes*. Removing them means ***less transparency, less consultation, and fewer protections for the environment and Indigenous lands.***

**Schedule 4 - Environmental Protection Act ERO (unclear if this is part of 025-0416 as it doesn't seem to have it's own ERO#)**

through the **Environmental Activity and Sector Registry (EASR)**, which is a system businesses use to register certain activities that impact the environment (like emissions or waste handling):

1. **Cancels the Existing Fee Document:**

The government is **revoking a document** that was signed by the Minister which set the **fees** for registering in the EASR.

2. **Allows for Refunds:**

The Minister is now allowed to **refund those fees** *if a registration is removed*

*from the system*—for example, if a business no longer needs to be registered or if their registration is cancelled under the Act.

#### **In short:**

It could make it **cheaper or easier for businesses** to withdraw from environmental oversight through the EASR, and give the Minister more **discretion over fee handling**. While it seems minor, This may signal a broader move to reduce the financial and regulatory burden on companies, even when their activities negatively affect the environment.

### **Schedule 5 ERO 025-0409 - Mining Act**

This Schedule makes major changes to how mining is managed in Ontario, especially when it comes to protecting what the government calls the “**strategic national mineral supply chain**”—basically, making sure important minerals (like those used in batteries or electronics) are controlled and prioritized.

#### **Key Concerns:**

- 1. Economic Growth Takes Priority Over Environmental and Indigenous Concerns**

The Act now explicitly states that mining activities should support Ontario’s economy. By embedding economic growth into the law’s purpose, ***environmental protection and Indigenous rights risk being sidelined when they are perceived to conflict with industry interests.***

- 2. Minister Can Suspend Mining Rules With No Public Input**

The Minister has new authority to suspend parts of the online mining claim system to protect the mineral supply chain. ***This power can be used without consultation, including on lands that may hold environmental significance or fall within Indigenous territories.***

- 3. Fast-Tracking Mining Projects Reduces Oversight**

A new permitting team can accelerate mining approvals by coordinating across ministries. ***This push for speed increases the risk that environmental reviews, duty-to-consult obligations, and community concerns will be bypassed or minimized.***

- 4. Minister Can Deny or Cancel Mining Leases Without Safeguards**

The Minister can now block or cancel leases and claims if they believe it benefits the mineral supply chain. ***This expands state control over land decisions — without guarantees that Indigenous rights, environmental harm, or treaty***



*obligations will be considered.*

#### 5. **Communities Cannot Challenge Harmful Decisions in Court**

The law removes the right to take legal action against decisions made under these new powers — even if a mining claim threatens ecological health or violates Indigenous jurisdiction. ***By extinguishing legal challenges, it cuts off one of the few tools communities have to defend land and water.***

#### **In short:**

These changes give the Ontario government sweeping new powers to **control who can access or develop Ontario's mineral resources**, especially critical minerals. It prioritizes economic and national interests, and allows the government to **override existing rights, cancel claims, or fast-track projects**, often without public input. The removal of legal recourse also means **people and communities can't challenge these decisions in court**, which raises serious concerns for landowners, Indigenous groups, and environmental advocates.

### **Schedule 6 ERO 025-0409- Ontario Energy Act 1998**

#### **Key Concerns:**

##### 1. **New Rules (Sections 43.1 & 73) give more centralized power:**

The government can limit where certain goods or services are purchased, based on their country, region, or territory of origin.

These restrictions can apply to:

- **Gas companies** and their subsidiaries — that the government chooses through regulations. (Section 43.1)
- **Licensed energy companies** and their subsidiaries — again, only the ones specified in regulations. (Section 73)

##### 2. Basically, if the government says so, these companies can be told not to buy from certain places, even from within Canada.

##### 3. **Protection from Lawsuits (Section 134)**

A new section says you *can't sue* the government (or certain other people) over things they did, didn't do or will do.

**Schedule 7 ERO 025-0418 - Heritage Act** [Proposed Amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act, Schedule 7 of the Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025](#)

## 025-0418 - Heritage Act Key Concerns:

### 1. **Loss of Control Over Ancestral Lands:**

The Minister can now order inspections on any land, *even underwater*, without consent. This could include traditional territories, raising the risk of intrusion, disruption, or claims on culturally important areas without involving Indigenous voices.

### 2. **Barriers to Accessing Sacred Artifacts:**

The law blocks anyone from touching or moving potential artifacts until a licensed archaeologist says it's okay. This creates a colonial gatekeeping system, where Indigenous people may be denied access to their own cultural items or sites.

### 3. **Artifacts Could Still Be Taken First, Returned Later—If at All:**

Although some artifacts may be handed to Indigenous communities, this only happens *after* they're seized. The power to decide where artifacts go still lies with the Minister, not the community they belong to.

### 4. **Cultural Sites Can Be Ignored for Development:**

The government can now *exempt* lands from heritage protections to prioritize housing or infrastructure. That means sacred or significant Indigenous sites can legally be bulldozed and ***communities have no legal way to stop it or seek justice.***

### 5. **Increased Surveillance Without Consent:**

Investigators have new powers to search, seize, and demand documents—***raising concerns about surveillance*** of Indigenous groups, cultural organizations, or businesses involved in heritage protection or repatriation efforts.

**Schedule 8 025-0416 – Rebuilding Ontario Place Act, 2023** ERO 025-0416 [Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act, 2025.](#)

This change says that **Part II of the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993** does **not apply** to anything involving the **Ontario Place Redevelopment Project**.

### **What does that mean?**

By exempting the Ontario Place redevelopment project from key parts of the Environmental Bill of Rights—specifically, the requirement to give public notice and

allow for public comment—it effectively silences the voices of Ontarians and removes a critical layer of environmental accountability. This proposed change is dangerous to both the environment and our democracy.

Normally, the Environmental Registry ensures transparency and gives people a chance to weigh in on developments that could affect their communities and ecosystems. Removing this opportunity means decisions that could have serious environmental impacts might move forward without public oversight or scientific scrutiny. And ***it's not just limited to the Ontario Place site—the exemption also applies to related projects beyond the site, creating a broad loophole for unchecked development.***

### **Schedule 9 ERO 025-0391 – Special Economic Zones Act, 2025** [Special Economic Zones Act, 2025 | Environmental Registry of Ontario](#)

#### **Key concerns:**

- The government can **exempt trusted companies or projects** from normal rules, like:
  - Municipal by-laws
  - Environmental rules
  - Other legal requirements
- ***The rules can also be changed or modified just for those companies or projects in the zone.***
- Legal suits over these exemptions or changes are significantly limited. Certain **legal claims (causes of action) are wiped out—they can't be brought to court.**

### **Schedule 10 ERO 025-0416- Species Conservation Act, 2025**

#### **Key Concerns:**

The updated approach to species protection includes new systems and structures but beneath the surface, several changes weaken the province's ability to prevent species decline and extinction. While the law maintains some conservation elements, it introduces gaps that place vulnerable wildlife and habitats at greater risk:

#### **1. Partial Protections for Some Species**

If species are already listed under federal laws, they will not receive full protection under Ontario's legislation. Some at-risk species may be monitored without meaningful provincial intervention — leaving them in danger despite their known vulnerability.

## 2. Extinction Becomes the Threshold, Not the Warning Sign

The legislation prohibits actions that would cause a species to become extinct *in Ontario* however, it does not prevent significant declines in population or habitat loss that fall short of extinction. This shifts the standard of protection dangerously low — effectively allowing harm to continue until a species is on the brink.

## 3. Permitting System May Facilitate Harmful Activity

While permits are required for activities that may affect species or their habitats, the authority to issue, amend, or revoke these permits rests solely with the Minister. ***This centralized discretion creates the possibility that industrial or development projects may be approved even if they compromise species survival, especially if those projects align with broader government priorities.***

## 4. Transparency Without Safeguards

A new digital registry does not ensure these decisions will be grounded in conservation science or subject to independent oversight. Public visibility, without corresponding accountability, ***offers little assurance that species will be protected from harmful decisions.***

## 5. Optional Guidelines Offer Weak Enforcement

The Minister may issue codes, standards, or best practices for species protection but these remain optional and are not binding. ***This undermines efforts to establish clear, enforceable rules for habitat preservation and recovery,*** relying instead on voluntary or situational compliance.

## 6. Risk of Disruption During Legal Transition

As the province transitions from the previous Endangered Species Act to this new framework, there is potential for disruption in existing protections, funding programs, and recovery efforts. ***Any pause in these activities, even temporary, may have lasting consequences for species already under stress from climate change, habitat loss, and human activity.***

## In Conclusion:

***Climate Action Newmarket Aurora is opposed to the aforementioned components of the 10 schedules of Bill 5. This Bill dismantles Ontario's science-based species protections, narrowing what counts as habitat and giving the government sweeping discretion. By putting hasty development first, it abandons ecological responsibility, vastly undermines Indigenous rights, and erodes democratic***

*oversight — leaving at-risk species with few to no safeguards, no path to recovery, and communities with no legal recourse.*

## Recommendations

The goal should be to **accelerate development** without **compromising public rights** or **nature's protection**. These alternatives can help strike a balance where:

- **Clean energy** projects are fast-tracked and incentivized,
- **Environmental standards** are upheld,
- **Public and Indigenous participation** remains central,
- **Biodiversity and ecosystems** are safeguarded.

### 1. Streamline Processes Without Eroding Oversight

- **Alternative:** Instead of completely bypassing **environmental consultation**, **fast-track** processes for projects that are already deemed **environmentally neutral** or have **pre-approved environmental standards**. This allows for quicker approvals but ensures environmental safeguards remain intact.
- **How It Helps:** **Maintains transparency** and **public involvement**, while still enabling fast-tracking of clean energy and infrastructure projects.

### 2. Strengthen Public and Indigenous Consultation

- **Alternative:** Introduce **mandatory consultations** with Indigenous communities and **local residents** for major projects, especially in **Special Economic Zones** or redevelopment areas like **Ontario Place**. Incorporating Indigenous knowledge and perspectives early in the planning process helps ensure land and cultural protection.
- **How It Helps:** Ensures **Indigenous rights** and **community input** are not sidelined, fostering **collaboration and better decision-making**.

### 3. Environmental Integrity with Flexibility

- **Alternative:** Use **clear criteria** for when **exemptions or modifications** to environmental rules apply—such as for projects that demonstrate **net positive environmental impact**, like **carbon-offsetting** or **biodiversity restoration** projects.  
**Introduce a "green certification" for developers** that meet sustainability standards, allowing them to access **expedited approvals**.
- **How It Helps:** Supports clean energy projects while maintaining **strong environmental protections** and **public trust**. It also incentivizes developers

and builders to consistently apply sustainable practices making them the norm in the industry.

#### 4. Enhanced Transparency and Accountability

- **Alternative:** Create a more transparent public dashboard on the ERO to track ongoing projects, environmental assessments, and public consultations. This allows citizens to stay informed, share concerns, and have access to real-time data without having to rely on reactive legal processes.
- **How It Helps:** Increases public engagement, ensures accountability, and supports clean energy/mining development while keeping stakeholders informed.

#### 5. Preserve and Improve Species Protection

- **Alternative:** Create conservation easements and partnerships with developers to protect habitat alongside development.
- **How It Helps:** Balances species protection with economic growth, ensuring that development doesn't come at the cost of biodiversity.

#### 6. Ongoing Investment in Conservation Programs

- **Alternative:** Expand the Endangered Species Act to include more public-private partnerships, with funding for habitat restoration, sustainable land-use planning, and community-based conservation efforts. Provide incentives for landowners or businesses to contribute to biodiversity preservation and carbon reduction.
- **How It Helps:** Promotes conservation without stifling development, offering incentives for environmental stewardship.

#### 7. Ensure Fair Compensation and Legal Recourse

- **Alternative:** Instead of extinguishing certain legal claims or appeals, reform the appeal process to make it more accessible and transparent, while ensuring that meritorious claims can still proceed, especially for cases where public health or environmental justice is at stake.
- **How It Helps:** Ensures that people still have access to legal avenues for holding the government accountable while reducing frivolous lawsuits that delay important projects.

#### 8. Foster Green Innovation in Special Economic Zones

- **Alternative:** Designate **Special Economic Zones** that specifically **promote green technologies** and **sustainable businesses**, such as renewable energy projects, clean-tech startups, or environmental research hubs. Provide **incentives** for companies that meet sustainability and environmental standards.
- **How It Helps:** Encourages **clean energy development**, **green innovation**, and investment opportunities while maintaining **environmental protections** within SEZs.



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Town of Aurora

## Member Motion

Councillor Weese

**Re:** **Opposition to Bill 5, *Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025***

**To:** Members of Council

**From:** Councillor Ron Weese

**Date:** July 15, 2025

Whereas Bill 5 was granted Royal Assent on June 5, 2025; and

Whereas Bill 5 amends several key pieces of legislation with the goal of fast-tracking economic development and introduces changes in legislation that affect local governance, labour laws and environmental protections; and

Whereas the legislation includes the *Special Economic Zones Act, 2025* (SEZ) that gives Queen's Park the power to designate areas where regulatory approval processes can be amended by the Ontario Government, potentially without input from local decision-makers; and

Whereas the *Endangered Species Act, 2007* has been dissolved and replaced by the *Species Conservation Act 2025*, which environmental critics argue removes important provisions of the former law; and

Whereas the new law also makes changes to the *Ontario Heritage Act* that potentially could impact Heritage site designations; and

Whereas this law has been rushed through the legislature in 49 days, limiting Committee time, public consultation and ensuring rapid passage;

1. Now Therefore Be It Hereby Resolved That Aurora Town Council officially opposes Bill 5 in its current form as it interferes with local planning authorities, limits public consultation, and threatens both heritage designations and endangered species; and
2. Be It Further Resolved That this Motion be forwarded to all 444 Ontario Municipalities, Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, and Hon. Stephen Lecce, Ontario Minister of Energy and Mines.





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## Member Motion

Councillor Weese

**Re:** **Opposition to Bill 17, *Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act*, 2025**

**To:** Members of Council

**From:** Councillor Ron Weese

**Date:** July 15, 2025

Whereas Ontario Bill 17 (the legislation) was granted Royal Assent on June 5, 2025; and

Whereas the legislation raises significant concerns related to democratic governance, environmental sustainability, municipal autonomy, and social equity; and

Whereas the legislation centralizes decision-making authority and reduces the power of local municipalities in planning and development approvals; and

Whereas the legislation curtails public consultation rights, limiting residents' ability to influence projects impacting their neighbourhoods; and

Whereas the legislation accelerates approvals by reducing time for environmental assessments, heritage evaluations, and public safety considerations that could result in substandard buildings, strained infrastructure and negative long-term effects on communities; and

Whereas the legislation threatens green spaces, natural habitats, and water resources overlooking careful measures that allows sustainable growth and undermines Ontario's commitment to environmental stewardship; and

Whereas the legislation limits public hearings and community engagement opportunities, which increases the risk of corruption, favouritism and poor local planning decisions;

1. Now Therefore Be It Hereby Resolved That Aurora Town Council officially opposes Ontario Bill 17 in its current form, and recommends;

- Restoring municipal autonomy, and ensuring meaningful consultation and decision-making power;

- Maintaining rigorous environmental, safety, and heritage assessments despite expedited timelines;
  - Incorporating clear affordable housing requirements within new developments;
  - Enhancing transparency, public engagement and accountability mechanisms;
  - Ensuring climate change mitigation is included in all development projects; and
2. Be It Further Resolved That this Motion be forwarded to all 444 Ontario Municipalities, Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, and Hon. Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

**The Corporation of The Town of Aurora**

**By-law Number XXXX-25**

**Being a By-law to confirm actions by Council  
resulting from a Special Meeting of Council  
on July 15, 2025.**

**The Council of the Corporation of The Town of Aurora hereby enacts as follows:**

1. That the actions by Council at its Special Meeting of Council held on July 15, 2025, in respect of each motion, resolution and other action passed and taken by the Council at the said meeting is hereby adopted, ratified and confirmed.
2. That the Mayor and the proper officers of the Town are hereby authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to the said action or to obtain approvals where required and to execute all documents as may be necessary in that behalf and the Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to affix the corporate seal to all such documents.

**Enacted by Town of Aurora Council this 15th day of July, 2025.**

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**Tom Mrakas, Mayor**

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**Ishita Soneji, Deputy Town Clerk**