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**Official Report
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Thursday 3 February 2005

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Jeudi 3 février 2005

**Standing committee on
general government**

Greenbelt Act, 2005

**Comité permanent des
affaires gouvernementales**

Loi de 2005 sur
la ceinture de verdure

Chair: Linda Jeffrey
Clerk: Tonia Grannum

Présidente : Linda Jeffrey
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES
AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES**

Thursday 3 February 2005

Jeudi 3 février 2005

The committee met at 1002 in committee room 1.

GREENBELT ACT, 2005

**LOI DE 2005 SUR
LA CEINTURE DE VERDURE**

Consideration of Bill 135, An Act to establish a greenbelt area and to make consequential amendments to the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, 2001 and the Ontario Planning and Development Act, 1994 / Projet de loi 135, Loi établissant la zone de la ceinture de verdure et apportant des modifications corrélatives à la Loi sur la planification et l'aménagement de l'escarpement du Niagara, à la Loi de 2001 sur la conservation de la moraine d'Oak Ridges et à la Loi de 1994 sur la planification et l'aménagement du territoire de l'Ontario.

The Chair (Mrs. Linda Jeffrey): Good morning. Could I ask you to take a seat? This is the standing committee on general government, and we're called to order. We're here today to resume public hearings on Bill 135, An Act to establish a greenbelt area and to make consequential amendments to the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, 2001 and the Ontario Planning and Development Act, 1994.

While members enjoy parliamentary privileges and certain protections pursuant to the Legislative Assembly Act, it is unclear whether or not these privileges and protections extend to witnesses who appear before committees. For example, it may very well be that the testimony you have given or are about to give may be used against you in a legal proceeding. I caution you to take this into consideration when making your comments. I would also like to remind those in attendance that there should be no demonstrations of support for or against any comments made by any presenters or members of committee. Last but not least, if you have a cellphone on you, would you please put it on vibrate so that you don't disturb any of our presenters? Thank you.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi (Northumberland): Is it possible to lower the screen and then put it up only if it's used? I don't think it's fair for those people.

The Chair: I have already asked that question. I believe our second presenter is actually using the screen, so after the second presenter, we'll take it down. I apologize that your view is obstructed, but until the

second delegation has been through and has presented, we can't take it down.

Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln): Do they get a discount on the ticket price?

The Chair: They should get a discount on their ticket price, you're absolutely right.

CITY OF MISSISSAUGA

The Chair: Our first delegation is from the city of Mississauga. Good morning and welcome. If you could identify who will be speaking today and what group you represent. When you begin, you will have 15 minutes. If you leave time at the end, there will be time for questions; if you don't, then that will be your time.

Ms. Pat Saito: OK, if we don't want questions, we won't leave time then, right? You can tell I'm a politician too. Thank you.

I'm Pat Saito. I'm councillor for ward 9, city of Mississauga, and I'm here today representing the council of the city of Mississauga. Mayor McCallion is in India; otherwise, she would be here before you. So you've lucked out and you got me instead. Anyway, I would like to first of all thank you for allowing the city of Mississauga this opportunity to present today. We appreciate having this time.

I'd like to start by saying that Mississauga supports the province's planning initiatives: the provincial policy statement, Bill 26, strong communities, the OMB reform and the draft greenbelt plan, as well as the growth plan for the greater Golden Horseshoe. Mississauga proposes that the growth plan is a priority and, to avoid conflicts, should be adopted in conjunction with provincial planning reforms, such as the provincial policy statement, the Planning Act, the OMB reform and the greenbelt plan.

Our comments are offered not only in the context of managing growth for the greater Golden Horseshoe but also in terms of the growth pressures facing maturing municipalities such as Mississauga for the next 30 years. We acknowledge that population in the greater Golden Horseshoe is expected to increase by 3.7 million persons and almost 1.8 million new jobs by 2031. Mississauga has absorbed considerable growth over the past 30 years to become Canada's sixth-largest city and Ontario's third-largest city. The last greenfields in Mississauga are now being developed, but the growth demands will

continue, primarily in the form of intensification—infill and redevelopment.

Mississauga is supportive of a growth plan for the greater Golden Horseshoe as the framework to manage growth and direct infrastructure investment. We recognize that the plan expects municipalities like Mississauga to accommodate its share of anticipated growth. The plan states that 40% of new growth is to be accommodated through intensification. While we currently have the third-highest density in the GTA-Hamilton area, we recognize those future growth demands and will continue to promote compact urban form, especially in the city centre.

The greenbelt plan will play a major role in achieving both provincial and municipal growth objectives. Mississauga supports the principles of the greenbelt plan, and we have already submitted comments to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal regarding the draft greenbelt plan and Bill 135. These were reports on November 16 and, on the growth plan, August 17, 2004.

We acknowledge that the greenbelt is the cornerstone of the greater Golden Horseshoe growth plan. There must be permanent protection of key environmental features and agricultural lands, which provides the environmental framework for growth management in the greater Golden Horseshoe. In addition, Mississauga acknowledges and finds merit in the recommendations in the letter dated December 3, 2004, to the Premier from the Municipal Leaders for the Greenbelt to expand the greenbelt to include natural heritage features, adding 800,000 acres, and the area between the existing settlement area and the proposed greenbelt, adding 180,000 acres.

Although the greenbelt is not located in Mississauga, the plan identifies connections from the greenbelt to Lake Ontario through Mississauga via the Credit River and the Etobicoke Creek river valleys. The location and extent of the greenbelt will, in part, determine the location and form of future development in the greater Golden Horseshoe and therefore the greenbelt plan will have an impact on future development in Mississauga. For example, the extent of the greenbelt in Brampton, the Bram West secondary plan area and the northwest portion of Brampton will have an impact on future development in Brampton and surrounding municipalities, including Mississauga.

Brampton is currently preparing a series of background reports examining the potential to expand the current urban boundary to include approximately 6,000 acres in northwest Brampton. If approved, this area could accommodate 51,000 to 113,000 persons, depending on density, and 21,000 employment opportunities.

Future development, the amount, type and location in Brampton and elsewhere, will have an impact on Mississauga in terms of, primarily, environmental concerns, as raised by the conservation authorities, including downstream flooding, erosion and storm water management; increased traffic and gridlock, and transportation planning; growth potential for Mississauga specifically—will

we be able to achieve provincial intensification targets?—and financial, and this refers to Mississauga's contribution to the regional budget. While noting these concerns, Mississauga does support Brampton's comments on the greenbelt plan and Bill 135 regarding the mapping concerns, the need to establish the basis for buffer zones and that the greenbelt plan should be considered with the growth management plan.

1010

You may ask again, "Why is Mississauga here when we have no greenbelt lands in Mississauga?" So I'm going to conclude by reiterating our position. Mississauga is strongly supportive of the province's initiatives to manage growth. An integral element of a sustainable growth plan is environmental protection. We recognize that the final determination of the greenbelt throughout the greater Golden Horseshoe will have a significant impact on the location and extent of growth within the current settlement areas. While the lands are not in Mississauga, the health and protection of the environment affects everyone. It should also be noted that all members of Mississauga council are also members of Peel regional council and, as such, we recognize the importance of the environment throughout the region of Peel. We know that to protect valuable green spaces in the greater Golden Horseshoe, Mississauga must also do its part; that is, accept more growth through intensification. We are willing to do this as our contribution to a healthier and more livable community.

I'd like to thank you for listening to us today.

The Chair: Thank you. You've left about three minutes for each party, starting with the government side. Ms. Van Bommel.

Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex): Thank you for your presentation. I hope that Mayor McCallion is enjoying India.

Ms. Saito: I haven't heard from her, so she must be having a good time.

Mrs. Van Bommel: She's quite the lady.

Because you're not part of the greenbelt specifically, we've heard a lot of different things, such as, there are people who feel we should delay moving forward with this, and there are others who are saying we need to move forward quickly. What would your opinion be in terms of the timelines for this?

Ms. Saito: As I mentioned, we feel very strongly that the greenbelt plan should not proceed in isolation of the growth plan. The two plans are really integral to each other, and we feel there's a need for the growth plan to move forward. We need that, and I know the other municipalities, particularly I think in the GTA, the 905 area, really need that growth plan.

Having said that, however, I also don't believe in moving forward until you've heard all the arguments from across the province. I know you're doing that now, but I would hope that when you've heard everyone and come to your conclusions, both plans would be proceeding together.

Mrs. Van Bommel: You want to move forward on both of them. And do you feel that you would benefit

from what some people think is a leapfrogging beyond the greenbelt?

Ms. Saito: Leapfrogging beyond the greenbelt can create its own unique problems, mainly transportation problems. I think we've all seen the results of that. We're fortunate in Mississauga—or unfortunate, as the case might be, if you look back over the years—that Mississauga was determined by the province to be fully urbanized and we had no opportunity to preserve any of our agricultural or greenbelt lands. We're down to one working farm right now, which is in the area I represent. I would like to fight to hold on to that working farm, quite honestly. It's a gem in our community.

We did have some leapfrogging internally when the community I represent, Meadowvale, was built. There was a big gap—the hole in the doughnut, as you might remember it being called—and it created problems. So I can see a lot of problems with leapfrogging.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Saito. From the official opposition, Mr. Hudak.

Mr. Hudak: Thank you, Councillor, for your presentation. It's rather ironic to have Mississauga here in the context of where the government has taken this initiative. Mayor McCallion, of course, is playing a very key role in leading the Smart Growth initiative, which was a more comprehensive approach. It was related to managing where growth would be and the preservation simultaneously, and the infrastructure plan. For whatever reason, whether it was some green envy or they had to rush out their own plan or put a red ribbon around it, the government separated all the parts out. You have the Minister of Agriculture over here, who has abandoned the field, has done nothing for farmers in the greenbelt area. Minister Caplan, while he introduced a bill on the same day, has also gone into hiding.

Mr. Rinaldi: It's coming.

Mr. Hudak: Like the Maple Leafs are going to win the Stanley Cup, I keep hearing "It's coming." But it hasn't—

Interjection.

Mr. Hudak: The Red Sox, OK. The Red Sox won the World Series. He's getting me off track.

It just demonstrates how this greenbelt, in our opinion—and we're hearing it more and more—has become a greenbotch, because all the pieces have been separated. You made an excellent point that it should proceed hand in hand, the growth plan along with the conservation efforts. I sincerely hope they will deliver on that but, sadly, I'm increasingly pessimistic. In fact, they wanted to actually jam this legislation through before Christmas.

I appreciate the points Mississauga made, and I agree fully that they should proceed hand in hand with Places to Grow, the agriculture strategy, and the greenbelt initiatives. Sadly, they are dispersed, and it has become chaos.

The Chair: Ms. Churley.

Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto–Danforth): Thank you for your presentation. You mentioned, and I know

that's where the Conservatives and others are at, the idea of waiting until the Places to Grow Act is in place. Then we had farmers yesterday asking that we wait until we have a complete farm viability plan in place etc.

My concern about that—and I have a lot of problems with the greenbelt as it is and will be making amendments to try to fix those, leapfrog being one of them, and the implications of that. But if this bill were to be held up waiting for God knows how long, especially the farm viability and Places to Grow, what would happen to all those lands? Would you recommend that they continue to be frozen until such time? Because otherwise they'd be freed up and, of course, bought up like that and developed. How would you deal with that?

Ms. Saito: Well, putting holding zones on lands is not uncommon; we do it all the time in municipal government while we're waiting for bylaws, design guidelines and other things to go through. When we're dealing with an area in which we're not really sure of where it's going to develop, we do use the holding zone under the Planning Act.

I'd like to stress that we're not suggesting that anything be held up. We have been urging that the growth plan has to move forward, that both plans have to move forward.

Ms. Churley: Which I would agree with, by the way, that part.

Ms. Saito: I agree with you that there's all of that uncertainty to the landowners, to the farm community and to the developers as well of what's going to happen to that land. We do need to move forward. I'm not sure what timelines the government is going to be on on this. We have very little control over that.

Ms. Churley: I don't think they do either.

Ms. Saito: But we are asking that the greenbelt plan move forward at the same time as the growth plan, and, as I'd really like to stress, that they both move forward expeditiously.

Ms. Churley: If you were given the understanding that the growth plan is not going to be ready for some time, because we don't have a date on it, would you propose moving forward with the greenbelt as is? I guess the question comes back again to, how long can this be sitting out there, because of the uncertainty around it as well for everybody concerned?

Ms. Saito: Ed Sajecki—I should have introduced Ed; I'm sorry—is our commissioner of planning. Ed is just reminding me that as a council we do not have a position on that. So what I'm going to say is really my own thoughts; I'm not speaking on behalf of council here.

If there is going to be a great delay in the growth plan, then no, I don't think the greenbelt plan should be held up, because you need to get some of those decisions made. Otherwise, decisions could be made, as you said, in the interim that would impact whatever the end result is of the greenbelt plan. That would be unfortunate, because once you lose something, it's impossible to get it back. So I think the protection is very critical.

Which comes first? I guess if I were to say which one would be first, I would probably say the greenbelt protection would be moving slightly ahead of the growth plan, but I just find it very difficult to separate the two.

Ms. Churley: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Saito, for your delegation. We appreciate your being here.

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PEEL FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE

The Chair: Our next delegation is the Peel Federation of Agriculture, Nick De Boer.

Mr. Nick De Boer: Thank you very much for allowing us to speak. My name is Nick De Boer. I'm representing the Peel Federation of Agriculture today.

Agriculture and the greenbelt—the final straw.

Agricultural viability: The greenbelt is what has pushed agriculture to the edge. This issue has been simmering on for too long. It's time to address the issue that no one will deal with, and that's farm viability. Agricultural viability is a large enough mass of profitable farm businesses that can support a varied agricultural supply network while enhancing the surrounding countryside.

When you look at the town of Caledon, the Peel Federation of Agriculture represents farmers in Caledon, Peel and Mississauga. As was noted, there is one farming operation in Mississauga. When we talk about our businesses—here's Peel region; the greenbelt runs through this area here.

Dairy equipment: We have to drive from Barrie for dairy supply equipment. Kitchener-Waterloo, down in this area, is another area; and Arthur, up in this area.

For farm equipment, we're dealing with businesses in Erin, which is in Wellington county, about here. We're also dealing in Barrie, Elmira and Guelph. There are some farm equipment dealerships in Caledon—one is in Nobleton, right over here on the border, and there's also one in Inglewood—but those are dealerships that don't stock a lot of agricultural parts and supplies. They're primarily businesses that deal with lawn and garden equipment, with an ag line as a supplement to it.

Cropping inputs: There is one dealership in Brampton, an elevator. It won't be there that much longer. It's on its way out, because it's a fairly big growth area. Crop elevators are fairly noisy, and people don't want to have them in their area. That's in this area. The rest of our cropping inputs come from either Bolton, which is in Caledon; Orangeville, which is in the northern fringe; or Alliston.

Livestock sales: If we're to sell our cows, we've got two yards, one in Cookstown and one in Kitchener.

What we want to do as agriculturalists is to provide safe, abundant, nutritious food at a fair return to the producer while protecting and enhancing the rural environment.

The land is a farmer's largest asset. That seems to be the big issue here today. We need to respect the present

and future landowners. Land is used as a retirement fund, even if it's purchased by family members. The problem is that if the farm business isn't profitable, then the land has to be sold at a reduced price, and that has a negative effect on the retiring individuals. If the operation were to locate somewhere else because expansion is impossible, then we'd have to have somebody who would be willing to purchase what is there so that the operation could move to another location.

Every landowner should be allowed to maximize the best possible use for their land while not negatively impacting the environment. I think agriculture has been doing that quite successfully, with very little intervention and very little support from the government.

Land is a business asset. Land is not the important part of the equation for food or for agricultural production. We've got hydroponics that eliminate the need for soil altogether.

Mapping needs to be done with landowners. We've had an exercise that the Peel Federation participated in, in Caledon, that showed there were a number of errors within the greenbelt as far as the mapping is concerned.

Garth Turner writes in the winter edition of Caledon Living: "The winners are people with properties already in use as homes or businesses, because they will become inherently more valuable over time. The losers are farm families who overnight will be stripped of their ability to sell their land at a decent price."

The food producer: This is what's important. This is the farmer. This is the knowledge and expertise that is brought to the table. This is the ability to turn sunlight, rain, soil and seeds into food for your table.

How did we get here? The OMB, the provincial agency, essentially made planning decisions overruling local governments. The cities are poorly planned and allowed to spread. Agriculture is forced to sell due to a cash crunch. We don't have the money to expand. We don't have the money to continue on, so that when an opportunity comes that we're allowed to sell this land we can take our knowledge, our experiences and abilities to another area of the province with some money to allow us to continue to produce food for this province.

Then we have the conflict between commuters and agriculture. It continuously increases, especially in our community where we end up being in the middle of the businesses to the south and the affordable homes even farther to the north. I think this was addressed through the discussions about leapfrog, and this will only get worse.

The available options that we see are: to implement OMB control reforms to strengthen local controls; increase the density in the settlement areas; and strengthen the Farming and Food Production Protection Act to ensure that there are laws against trespassing; and to allow the operations that are there to continue without conflict with the neighbours.

In the big picture, financial viability must be addressed first. I think a lot of my members and a lot of people in the agricultural community have been bringing that to the table throughout the last four days. That is the

most important thing. The greenbelt is just the last piece of legislation that has been sent, and this is the one that has tilted the table, so to speak.

The agricultural community must be represented on any board or commission that may be developed from this exercise; for example, the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation has no agricultural representation.

On the local level in Caledon, we would support a move of the southern border of the line to the boundaries of the Oak Ridges moraine and the Niagara Escarpment. This would allow local policies to prevail. The Peel federation spent many years working with the town of Caledon to develop OPA 179, which theoretically, matched with a number of other things, including provincial and federal dollars to make agriculture sustainable, will help to continue to have agriculture in the community. This is a plan that was developed locally.

We need to have consistent rules for a large area so that we can reduce the regulations. We've got an area here that could conceivably be very small in total land mass but be covered by four levels of regulations. Oak Ridges moraine, Niagara Escarpment, protected countryside and Caledon OPA 179 are potential growth areas. So we've got a very small area and, in most cases, which side of the road you are on will dictate as to what you end up with. This would also apply to the 800 acres that our members own presently in the city of Brampton that are also designated as protected countryside.

As far as the GTA and things the province can help with: Assist the local GTA federations and regions to attempt to deliver the agricultural action plan. I believe you had a presentation on the action plan. It's something that will be unfolded to the regional councils and the regional chairs within the next three weeks.

I would also suggest that the government make use of an OMAF-produced report, the Dufferin-Caledon life sciences and agriculture report that was released I think about two years ago. I would also suggest that you utilize the TRCA/CVC rural clean water program to deliver money to agriculture.

All these programs are already there, and to some degree or another, up and running; very easy to continue on with.

Another recommendation is to take more time before passing this law. Assess the entire area using our definition of agricultural viability.

We want you to enable a fair and simple appeal process so that if there is something that's missed, there is some way to address it, instead of going straight to the minister.

Require that lands in the future that are required for public use are paid for at off-greenbelt prices. Many of our members in Caledon have come back with repeated stories of being moved off land that was in the greenbelt, in the Mississauga area and in the Brampton area, only to find those lands sold at higher prices later on, as the government decided they didn't need them.

The prime agriculture land designation has to be changed to rural to allow for broader uses, as opposed to what's available on the prime agriculture designation.

Beyond the Oak Ridges moraine: All the requirements for agriculture have to be based on science. This also refers to the Nutrient Management Act and the clean water act or anything that comes through. We need to have a science base behind the regulations. This includes the greenbelt.

We need to increase opportunities for additional income. That's for the entire agricultural industry. We also need to increase support for agriculture with both financial assistance programs and technology transfer. This is an area that OMAF should be the leader in.

I leave you with this picture: When you look at the first one, there's a nice rural landscape, a farming scene that you would like to see out there, with sunflowers growing, but if you look in behind, there is the Cheltenham brick factory: This area is a working landscape. We all need to develop as much profit out of our land as we can to remain viable.

1030

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. De Boer, for a very attractive presentation. You've left about a minute and a half for each party, beginning with the official opposition.

Mr. Hudak: Nick, a great presentation: I want to commend you for your work, and on behalf of Caledon council as well. I had the pleasure of joining with you at that meeting. I believe there are 69 errors that were brought forward and confirmed by the municipality in one meeting alone. Maybe you could verify that. Secondly, on a scale of 1 to 10, from 1 being very poor to 10 being excellent, what's your confidence that the government has the science right?

Mr. De Boer: By the maps and a lot of the information, your numbers are right. I think we were told 69 different errors. As residents and as farmers, we have very little confidence in the science. When we look at one operation, primarily the map, and Mr. Doyle was shown it, one map has a farm of approximately 100 acres where over half of it was viewed as being woodland; in fact, there was no bush on this property at all. This was a property that has all the features on it: greenbelt, Oak Ridges moraine plus this growth area. That's where you need to have local people having a look at the maps, having a look at what there is there and showing us what's on their properties. We used current aerial photography to show it.

Mr. Hudak: So 1 to 10?

Mr. De Boer: As not being good science, 9 or 10.

Ms. Churley: Thank you for your presentation. I just wanted to ask you—I don't have enough time, and you went into some of it—with or without a greenbelt, what are the priorities you need to see in place when you talk about viability? There are lots of issues around BSE and low commodity prices and a whole bunch of stuff. What would you like to see the government do right now that would make a difference?

Mr. De Boer: We need to have farm income stabilization. When we look at competing against the US and Quebec, we are at least half to 25% lower in the prices

we get. When we get a government that is willing to step up to the plate when farmers are having difficulty and ensure that they have dollars in the bank account so they can pay for their seeds to go in the ground this spring, which is what the Americans do—they put money there in the fall and in the winter, so that the farmers have the money. That's what we need. We need assistance. We can compete on a worldwide basis with anybody in agriculture, but we cannot compete against the treasuries of other provinces and other large governments. So there is no one answer.

Ms. Churley: But this is a priority for right now.

Mr. De Boer: This has got to be a priority. We need dollars, because we are a terminal generation. The last farmers are on the land today. If you think there's a problem with doctor shortages, when the last farmer leaves, I think we've got a problem.

Mrs. Van Bommel: Thank you, Mr. De Boer, for your presentation. I absolutely agree with your slide, "How did we get here?" You're talking about the OMB. As a government, we have changed the Planning Act so that we put more power into the hands of the local municipalities and local councils so that they can avoid exactly what you're talking about there.

When we talk about such things as the suppliers and that, do you think suppliers would come back into your area if they were sure there would be customers they could do business with in your area?

Mr. De Boer: No. The vast majority of the suppliers we deal with have diversified. The equipment suppliers that are there will remain only because they supply the non-agricultural market. As for the fertilizers, the grain elevator, there isn't the critical mass of farmers left, I would say, below the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges moraine—within that inside area. I spoke to many of our suppliers that I deal with and they do not see the growth. With the lack of dollars in the industry, especially in the grain and oilseeds industries, the lack of dollars is going to make fewer and fewer of those farmers have the ability to support those industries.

Mrs. Van Bommel: Did the Peel federation participate in making a presentation to the Smart Growth panel?

Mr. De Boer: I believe they did. I don't know. I did not.

Mrs. Van Bommel: What was your position at that time on preservation of farmland?

Mr. De Boer: We can preserve farmland but we have to do it with viability in mind. In some of these areas, when we use our definition of viability, we need a critical mass of agriculture to support the industries that support agriculture. People have been able to buy 100-acre and 50-acre parcels of land. These are parcels of land that the town of Caledon, through the Peel Federation of Agriculture, tried to maintain as 100-acre parcels but, through the OMB, were allowed to be split into two 50-acre parcels. That was just recently. So we do support the preservation of agriculture, but it has to be done using the viability definition that we use. We need a critical mass.

You can't move farm equipment on roads with no shoulders, where we've got 2,000 and 3,000 cars a day on the roads. That has to be addressed. There are a number of things in here that are keeping farmers from being viable, and that's what will affect, in the long term, what lands should remain in agriculture and what lands it makes sense to keep in agriculture.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. De Boer, for your time.

Mr. De Boer: Thank you very much for the time, and enjoy the rest of your day.

KING ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

The Chair: We're going to take a minute or two to take down the screen, and when we get the screen down our next delegation will be King Environmental Groups.

Good morning and welcome. Could you identify yourself and the group you're speaking for for Hansard, and when you begin you'll have 15 minutes.

Mr. Jeff Laidlaw: My name is Jeff Laidlaw. I'm speaking on behalf of King Environmental Groups. You have been handed a book like this. You'll find the presentation is inside that. The book is yours to keep after this. The presentation will tear out. It's tear-away tape. It's pretty simple stuff. That's just so you're familiar with King and can see what King is all about.

I am the chairman of King Environmental Groups. For background, King Environmental Groups, or KEG, as it's more frequently referred to, is a coalition of King City Preserve the Village Inc., Concerned Citizens of King Township Inc. and Nobleton Alert Residents' Association Inc. I will primarily focus on KEG's view of King township's local issues in reflecting on the greenbelt legislation.

KEG was formed primarily to represent the common interest and belief of the three mentioned groups that the York Durham sewer system—YDSS/big pipe—should not be allowed to hook up to King City, the issues being the destruction of farmland, the creation of new lands for urban sprawl, the destruction of a rural way of life, the destruction of the environment, financial considerations and, probably most importantly, fresh water supply concerns.

KEG was thrilled with the introduction of the Oak Ridges moraine act and plan and hailed it as the protector of King township. Foolishly, on first review, it appeared that King township's rural nature would be preserved and protected. On further review, the exceptions started to make themselves known. Nobleton and King City were defined as settlement areas. Using King City as the example, under planning guidelines, King City would not only be allowed to grow, but that growth also called for intensification of up to four units per acre. A small rural village of 5,000 people was now legitimately threatened with a potential population of 45,000 people. KEG has argued against the YDSS servicing choice for King City as it is the harbinger of growth; as York region has insisted that King City be serviced by an 18-inch force main, which by our calculations will allow for growth of

King City to some 60,000 people, despite an official plan for growth to 12,000.

KEG has delivered presentation papers to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing; the Ministry of the Environment; the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario; the Ministry of the Attorney General; our MPP, Mr. Greg Sorbara, Minister of Finance; and Premier Dalton McGuinty, outlining our allegations that the King City YDSS hook-up will contravene the Oak Ridges moraine legislation in five separate areas.

For a moment, with this in mind, I will re-draw the focus of this presentation back to the Greenbelt Act and some of the issues of contention.

First, ambiguous terminology: Like the Oak Ridges moraine act, the Greenbelt Act allows for infrastructure where there is a demonstrated need and no reasonable alternative. In King City's case, the demonstrated need has been a trumped-up health issue. Despite peer review which clearly indicated the dubious merit of a health concern and a complete lack of scientific supporting documentation and evidence, the government of Ontario has bought into this alleged health issue.

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KEG would suggest that politics and the political support of a wealthy development industry has caused the McGuinty government and the itinerant bureaucrats to turn their heads the other way; to refuse to review the documentation; to conveniently sidestep the issue. It's simple, expedient and convenient to ignore the facts in favour of supporting the development of some 2,300—minimum—more homes on the Oak Ridges moraine, despite assurances prior to the election by Dalton McGuinty that the government of Ontario was planning to stop further building on the Oak Ridges moraine.

In the matter of reasonable alternatives, peer review in King City's case has clearly shown that there are no fewer than four reasonable and/or feasible alternatives to the big pipe for sewer servicing for King City. Again, KEG feels that these alternatives have been given short shrift in review, and our drawing attention to these matters has fallen on deaf ears within all ministries.

Having told the story and given the illustration, I will now expand on the issue of concern for the Greenbelt Act.

In KEG's view, and based on our experience, we foresee the so-called greenbelt potentially being covered, in King at least, with the 427 extension northbound, a new and integrated hydro network and, in King City—and, we suspect, in due course, Nobleton—urban sprawl. This, to our way of thinking, is completely contrary to the intent of the greenbelt. It seems clear that we are dealing with image over substance.

The second issue stemming from the King City example is simply one of enforcement. KEG has spent considerable time, money and effort in bringing forward lengthy and well-thought-out discourses on the, to us, obvious contraventions. We have presented to the Ministry of the Environment, for example, an 88-page document alleging contravention of the Ontario Water

Resources Act with the hook-up of King City to the YDSS. By our calculations, the hook-up of King City and a population of 12,000 people will lead to a net water supply deficit of one billion litres of water per annum. For your information, we note that on April 30, 2004, York region held a public meeting at which the water supply issue was the main topic and at which York region admitted to a shortfall in supply.

KEG was encouraged when the Greenbelt Act was presented. In its draft format, it stated that towns and villages within the greenbelt could not be serviced by Great Lake-based water or sewage treatment systems. This, to KEG's way of thinking, would halt the YDSS and would give the MOE reason to pause. It is, however, unfortunate that at a meeting of January 24, 2005, in King township, the director of planning for King township noted that the clause with respect to Great Lake-based water and sewer systems was, according to his discussions with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, to be amended and/or deleted. KEG feels that the original intent—that is, that the greenbelt plan be consistent with the source water protection plan and the annex 2001 agreement—has been sidetracked.

The issue, though, comes down to the ability to enforce and follow up on the contraventions. For the record, KEG maintains that the big pipe connection to King City leads to contravention of the following acts: the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act and plan, the Ontario Water Resources Act, the Fisheries Act and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. These allegations have fallen entirely on deaf ears. We have received limited acknowledgment of our allegations and no definitive responses.

Our lawyers have been continually notified and have advised us that we can go to court over each of these allegations and that we are in the position legally of pursuing private prosecution. The cost, however, for a small grassroots organization is absolutely staggering. One of the basic tenets of law is that it be accessible to the public. In today's world, this is not the case.

KEG feels that if one wants a meaningful Greenbelt Act/Oak Ridges moraine act, then one of two things must occur: (a) There must be the opportunity for individuals and grassroots organizations to challenge the rules without having to mortgage their lives; and (b) the government must respond to challenges with the broad public interest in mind.

It is simple enough to implement an act like the Greenbelt Act, and in fact the broad public support for the concept is arguably what created the act in the first place. The difficulty lies in the exceptions, the ambiguous and wilfully manipulated terminology and the commitment that the Ontario government has, or does not have, to the basic precept.

The third issue I wish to deal with today is the question of exceptions. King City lies 100% on the Oak Ridges moraine. The scientific community has created a sound and reasonable case for the ongoing protection of this vital water recharge network, which resulted in

legislation which theoretically was to protect the Oak Ridges moraine. Unfortunately, King City was created as an exception. It was, for whatever reason, defined as a settlement area. There is no legitimate reason for this definition that we can ascertain with the exception of the desire for growth by York region and selected King township politicians.

As mentioned previously, King City is a small, rural village of 5,000. It supports few retail outlets and very limited industry. It's in the southeast corner of King township, a rather large and undeveloped land area which has as its major industry agriculture. In fact, the only draw that KEG can see for interest in King City by the development industry is large tracts of undeveloped land within close proximity to Highway 400 and the city of Toronto.

Oddly enough, one might think that King township was the ideal example of what the Greenbelt Act is trying to preserve: large areas of undeveloped land, grade A agricultural lands and what the Oak Ridges moraine act is trying to preserve—water recharge networks.

It appears to KEG, however, that York region with its growth-related agenda, in co-operation with various government agencies, bureaucrats and politicians, has managed to give the development industry the foothold necessary to utilize this land in ways completely contrary to the intent of the Greenbelt Act.

By the same token, the village of Stouffville has received the same treatment and, as I understand from the greenbelt public meeting in Caledon, there are exceptions across the entire proposed greenbelt area where one might think logically the land should be included in the greenbelt but for whatever reason is not.

King Environmental Groups recognizes the limitations and the wide and varied interests in putting forward any acts. We recognize that, for example, financial planning and considerations should be given to the farming industry. We recognize that southern Ontario is anticipating a net migration to the GTA of an additional four million people. We fully applaud and support the conceptual frameworks of the Oak Ridges moraine act and plan, the Greenbelt Act and plan and the Places to Grow paper.

On the other hand, KEG feels that the exceptions, the enforcement issue and the terminologies lend themselves too easily to interpretation, manipulations and abuse, which makes one suggest that the Greenbelt Act in its current form is an exercise in image over substance.

We encourage this standing committee on general government to ensure that the finished products are substantial.

From KEG's standpoint, we believe a commitment to the greenbelt and the Oak Ridges moraine would be proven out by stopping the YDSS connection to King City.

Thank you for the opportunity of reflecting these comments.

The Chair: Thank you. You've left just over a minute for each group, beginning with Ms Churley.

Ms. Churley: Thank you very much for coming. As you know, I've raised this issue many times in the Legislature in questions and in speeches. I'm not quite sure still if the government understands why this should not go ahead because it's not mentioned in the proposed growth management plan as an area for growth, and appropriately so because it sits on the moraine, which is really in the heart of the greenbelt on prime agricultural land and the headwaters of the Humber River. When I first raised it in the House, in fact one of the Liberals actually yelled out at me, "What does this have to do with the greenbelt?"

I think that what is important is that, on one hand, the government's bringing forward this greenbelt, we have a lot of concerns about what's been left out, but we also have this major concern about this particular piece, which goes against the grain of everything that's been said about stopping urban sprawl—some leapfrog development. The question would be, they've raised the issue of health, the health concerns, and you mention that. What are the alternatives?

Mr. Laidlaw: Certainly if there were a legitimate health concern—and I'm not going to give that the veracity—one could put in a local communal solution. There are four alternatives that have been identified that would be affordable quite easily and in fact cost considerably less than the YDSS.

The other option, which would be even simpler and cheaper, would be to fix whatever broken septic systems there may be. Quite honestly, there are very few that need fixing.

Ms. Churley: So there are alternatives. So you think it's more about growth and development?

Mr. Laidlaw: To my way of thinking, this is very much about growth, yes.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Laidlaw. From the government side, Ms Matthews.

Ms. Deborah Matthews (London North Centre): I have a question for you. Do you support the greenbelt legislation?

Mr. Laidlaw: I support the conceptual framework of the greenbelt legislation. I support the direction that I think it's going.

Ms. Matthews: Do you think we should delay it?

Mr. Laidlaw: I think there are some issues that certainly need to be considered. If you delay implementing the act, then you should probably maintain a freeze until such time as you put an act in place. That would be the best answer I could give you.

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The Chair: For the official opposition, Mr. Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke): Thank you for your presentation this morning. It would seem that regardless of what side of this debate you're on, one thing is consistent, and that is "image over substance"—you used the phrase twice in your presentation. It seems that this is what the government has tried to do because of their polling, not planning; because of

politics, not protection. They've trotted out this greenbelt plan because they believe it's got popular support within certain areas. Without any regard to the effects of it, they're just shoving this out here, saying, "Here we are; we're going to take care of everything because we're the new Liberal government and we fix things."

This area that you're talking about, I believe, is part of the finance minister's riding. I can't imagine there would be any politics involved. I think the one thing that's consistent is that there's a lack of planning involved here, whether it affects your group or the farmers we've heard throughout these days of hearings.

Interjection.

Mr. Yakabuski: My friend from the third party says we can't delay this because the bulldozers are lined up outside waiting for the go-ahead to pave over everything that's green. But I think it is important that we take the time to get this right. It's better to get it right than to have to admit five years down the road that we've got a mess. I think that what you've raised today is a legitimate concern. I thank you for joining us.

Mr. Laidlaw: Thank you for that statement.

The Chair: Your time has expired. Thank you very much for coming today; we appreciate your being here.

SPRING HEDGE FARM

The Chair: Our next delegation is Spring Hedge Farm. Good morning. Will you be the only one speaking today?

Ms. Lynne Moore: The three of us will be speaking.

The Chair: OK. Could you sit down and tell us your names for Hansard, and the group you represent. When you do begin, you'll have 15 minutes. If you use all the time, I won't be allowed to give an opportunity for people to ask you questions. So use your time accordingly.

Ms. Moore: My name is Lynne Moore. These are two of my three sons: David and Brent. We live on a dairy farm at 13299 Heritage Road in Terra Cotta. It's part of the town of Caledon in the Peel plain.

Mr. David Moore: My name is David Moore. I'm 13 years old, and I go to Herb Campbell School. I'm active in 4-H and Air Cadets, and I dance. I like to show my calves at fairs, and I drive the tractors around the farm. I would like to have a chance to farm someday.

Mr. Brent Moore: Good morning. My name is Brent Moore. I'm an 18-year-old student at Robert Land Academy. I'm active in Army Cadets, and I'm working on my National Star training. My brother Brian would like to be here to speak to you today, but he's working on an electrical apprenticeship.

I wanted you to see us because we're basically part of the future of farming. If you zone us as greenbelt, that could be taking away our future. My mom here will speak to you about the details.

Ms. Moore: About 23 years ago, I married a dairy farmer. At that time, I knew that it would be a long road full of unique challenges. In 1982, my husband and his

father were operating a 200-acre farm with the help of a full-time herdsman and a student each summer. I got a job away from the farm to help save money and prepare for our future together. We now have three sons—you see two of them today—and I continue to hold a job away from the farm in order to be able to afford the day-to-day needs of our home and children.

I am the first generation of farm wife who has needed to work off the farm, even though there's enough work for me to do at home. When I finish work away, I come home and assist with the farm. Brian, Brent and David help after school and on weekends.

Over the years, it became more and more challenging to keep a full-time herdsman. Not only did no one want to work that hard, but living so close to Brampton and Toronto, jobs were readily available for those who wanted easier work with all weekends off. Because of this, we had to sell some milk quota, cut back the number of cows we milk and do all the work ourselves. We no longer have a full-time herdsman, and last summer we were not even able to hire a student for the whole summer. None of the students worked out and, during my holidays from my other job, I milked cows on our dairy farm.

We do have three sons, as I've mentioned before, but Brian, our oldest, is working on his electrical apprenticeship; Brent, our middle son, worked last summer as a staff sergeant at Camp Borden; and our youngest son, David, was lucky enough to be chosen for an Air Cadets camp at Trenton. We need our sons to pursue more than just the farm, as we see the farm offering them less of a future each year, especially if we have to stay in the GTA.

If you look at the map on the last page, you'll see that our farm is located on the Peel plain in the township of Caledon. You've only left one concession, which is five farms deep, south of the Niagara Escarpment. There is no environmental reason why our land should be within the greenbelt, especially when there's so little farmland on this side of the escarpment. The way this greenbelt map has been drawn, about 15 farmers have been left on the Peel plain to fend for themselves, using some land that's idle because other farmers aren't using it, and then their own. The logical dividing line would be the escarpment.

I've worked with Mayor Morrison, the town of Caledon, the Caledon Countryside Alliance and other farmers on the Peel plain. The town of Caledon, the environmentalists and the farmers are all working together. We all agree that there's not enough land left on the Peel plain to leave farming viable and that the best way to save agriculture is to move the greenbelt up to the natural southern boundary of the escarpment. There is no longer any agricultural infrastructure. Instead, we are surrounded by the infrastructure for development. A GO train station is opening on Monday, five minutes away from our farm. Shopping and jobs are not much further.

I do see the need for environmentally fragile land to be protected and I also see that we must have enough good farmland to produce healthy food for everyone in this

country. I think that if the farmland in this area had been protected about 30 years ago, then we would have had a chance for farming to be viable in this part of the GTA. However, with development on our doorstep, it is too late to protect our land. I do recommend that other agricultural areas be looked at immediately and protected for agriculture before it's too late, as your greenbelt plan is sure to trigger urban growth in the surrounding communities just outside the greenbelt.

Many who live in the GTA think this plan is wonderful and would like to protect even more in this area. The problem is that the only ones who are paying for this greenbelt are those of us who are on the farms, living and farming in this area. We have noticed how many parcels of land sold to developers prior to the greenbelt managed to stay just outside the protected area. My understanding is that 82% of the public wants this greenbelt. Well, if 82% of the public want it, then all the public should pay for it, not just a few farmers, especially at a time when farming is tougher than it has been for generations.

The costs have continued to soar, while each year, especially in the last, we make less. Over the last 10 years, most of the agricultural grants were not offered in our area, as we live in the GTA and the government did not want to invest in farmland that would soon be urban. We pay higher taxes and higher insurance rates as well. Then in the last 10 years, as there is no agricultural infrastructure anymore, we must drive over an hour and a half each way to get machinery, feed and all the other products we need. We go to Elmira because that's where we get quality. We also must pay mileage to companies to come out and bring service on top of the cost of the actual service. We've lost over 25% because of BSE alone. Now you want to zone our farm greenbelt or protected countryside, lowering the value of our land at a time when we need to sell and move to a more agriculturally based community.

Farm life is tough these days—so tough that many are thinking about giving up. One of my family members is getting to that point now. She, at only 43 years of age, farms a property a few miles south of us. Along with her husband's family, they have been operating a very successful farm on the same property for six generations. During the last few years, with development getting closer and closer, numerous costly government regulations to implement, the Bram West Parkway proposed to go through their property. And now the greenbelt—they're ready to give up. Due to the fact that 90% of their farm is now zoned natural heritage, they cannot even sell the farm as an estate lot, not that anybody wants to build their fancy estate lot on a property where a six-lane highway is going to go through the middle.

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They're on the brink of selling the quota now, and they've even put it on the market. They're just not sure what they're going to do with the apples. Their farm in the city of Brampton has been left, along with two other farms, to try to survive alone. There's something terribly wrong with a greenbelt plan that is set up to protect

farmland but instead makes farmers give up and throw in the towel.

Just to top off the whole challenge for us, we were informed last year that the highway quietly referred to as the GTA east-west corridor is proposed to go right through our farm. I also understand that in August our provincial government will be announcing three mega-dumps to support Toronto in the GTA. One of these landfills will be in the east, one in the west and maybe one in the north. When you look at the maps and see the Bram West Parkway coming right up from the 401-407 area and stopping at Mayfield Road, it is very probable to me that this west GTA landfill could end up right on my farm and the farms that are included in this 1,000-acre block. Why else would a six-lane highway come up and stop just south of the greenbelt?

These dumps can even be larger than 1,000 acres, and will continue to ruin all the farmland that surrounds us as well. Is this your interpretation of good use for greenbelt land? I see what you are saving this little strip of land south of the escarpment for. A dump goes against everything I know to be pure, clean and green. What a greenbelt.

How are we supposed to continue to maintain our buildings and land, knowing that someday in the future this could all be pavement or a dump? We know that we will not be paid for the improvements we make here, yet we must maintain these buildings and this property in order to be viable. Nutrient management is just another requirement the provincial government will have us comply with in the near future, and this could cost us as much as \$200,000. We could be better spending and investing this money, plus all our time and effort, toward a farm where we can settle and have a chance to be a successful farm family.

We must also start making plans for our sons. At 21, 18 and 14, it is the time. If we want to bring even one of our sons into the operation, we would need to milk at full capacity. To milk at full capacity, we would need to buy more land to comply with nutrient management. There is no land available here for expansion. If things don't improve soon, though, we will have to start selling our quota to buy land somewhere else, and this will mean our sons no longer have a chance or a choice to milk cows.

The government seems to think it's simple for us to just sell our farm to someone else who would like to farm. The problem is that anyone who is truly interested in making a viable living at farming would not locate here at our farm. It's hard enough for a farm anywhere these days. It's far easier to be a successful farmer in a farm community where the infrastructure is still in place. The only ones who want to purchase this land are those who are true speculators. They might not even mind if there's a road going through, but they sure won't want a dump.

I have recommendations.

(1) I recommend that the only way to put this greenbelt in place is first to delay Bill 135 and take the time to do it right. Go ahead with your growth plan first

to show your placement of roads, landfill and other infrastructure.

(2) Get agricultural programs in place to assist all farmers in Ontario. Your food source is cheaper here than any other country in the world, and that food source will disappear if you don't look after it and after the farmers.

(3) I'd also like you to take a closer look at the map. The viability issue must be looked at when you are talking about protecting farms. Remember, protecting farmland will not protect agriculture, especially in an area where the agricultural infrastructure is gone and you cannot bring it back.

(4) Use natural boundaries like the escarpment, and real science, instead of the straight lines and political science shown in the draft.

(5) Plan for the whole province. This will stop the leapfrogging.

(6) No matter what farm assistance is put in place, and even if we get the programs back that will support agricultural prosperity, it will not change the fact that the cost will be substantially more to farm here in my farm than in any other agricultural community.

(7) Leave highways and landfills out of the greenbelt.

(8) Don't make this a cost just to the farmers and the landowners. Environmental payments might be an example of programs that will assist farmers who are stewards of the land.

(9) Remove sections 18 and 19 of Bill 135. Allow us the rights that each of you have with your property and allow us the fair right to a fair appeal to a court. I do not know the minister on a first-name basis and he does not know me, so I would like a court system to decide what is fair. Even murderers have the right to an appeal. I feel, as a law-abiding, taxpaying citizen, that I should at least have the same rights as a murderer.

Treat the landowners who stand to lose so much with respect. If you must take the land for your communication, transportation or major services, as you call them, abide by the expropriation laws that are set out to protect the landowner.

For the record, I also want a question asked. If my land is zoned in the greenbelt and my land is taken for any of your communication, transportation or major services, will it be protected by the expropriation laws?

By forcing us to stay on this property, where it costs us a lot more to farm than the average farmer, a property that very likely could have a major highway or a dump on it, you are taking the future of farming away from my sons, Brian, Brent and David.

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs. Moore. You've left about 30 seconds for each party to ask you a question, beginning with the government side.

Mrs. Van Bommel: I certainly want to say to you that I see no reason why you wouldn't be protected under the normal laws, under the protection of the expropriation laws. I don't see anything in the bill—

Ms. Moore: The way Bill 135 is written, it says it supersedes expropriation. I've had a lawyer look at it.

Mrs. Van Bommel: That is not what we understand at all. There is no—

Ms. Moore: It's not written very clearly.

Mrs. Van Bommel: In other words, we need to clarify that particular section then.

Ms. Moore: Honestly, I feel that if you put me in the greenbelt, I have a very big chance of being taken for a highway, a dump or something. Not that that's what I want on my property.

Mrs. Van Bommel: No, none of us would.

Ms. Moore: I need to know that those expropriation laws, that are set there to protect a landowner, will protect me.

The Chair: The official opposition.

Mr. Yakabuski: Thank you for your presentation, Mrs. Moore, and thank you for bringing your sons to join us today. Do you know what I find remarkable? It's almost uncanny. I almost believe that the so-called science people who drew up this greenbelt plan must be descendants of the original surveyors, because it's amazing how perfectly those lines correspond with the concession lines in the townships. Isn't it amazing that science and surveys from a couple of hundred years ago would actually correspond so perfectly to a new greenbelt plan in 2005?

Ms. Moore: Especially when the Niagara Escarpment is only one concession north and it's a natural boundary. It's not going to proceed past that. That would stop it naturally.

Mr. Yakabuski: Maybe those surveyors wrote something in their will so their science is—

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Yakabuski. Ms. Churley, you have the floor.

Ms. Churley: Didn't I see you guys yesterday?

Ms. Moore: You've seen me on a lot of days.

Ms. Churley: I thought so, and you two, too. Thank you for coming today and taking the trouble—

Interjections.

The Chair: Can we stop the cross-chatter, please. Ms. Churley, you have the floor.

Ms. Churley: You've created a storm here. Thank you for coming and expressing your views to us. The whole purpose of the greenbelt is in fact supposed to protect your farmland. So if there's anything within the bill that would actually mean that it does the opposite—

Ms. Moore: It does the opposite for us.

Ms. Churley: —then obviously we will have to fix that, because that goes against the grain of what the government says it's supposed to be doing.

Ms. Moore: The GO station is opening five minutes from our home on Monday. That shows that the infrastructure is in place for development.

Ms. Churley: Yes, if you build the infrastructure, they will come. That's for sure.

Ms. Moore: The infrastructure is already built.

Ms. Churley: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs. Moore. Thank you, boys, for coming in. We appreciate your time.

Mr. Hudak: Chair, I appreciate the presentation by Mrs. Moore and her sons. It's nice to see them participating in this process. She does ask a good question and I don't think we got to it in our technical briefing. I know she has had discussions with the minister's office, Mr. MacKenzie. Perhaps we could have staff get back to us as members of the committee on whether the suspension of expropriation or other protections would impact on a property owner for a future dump, for a future highway or anything of that nature, just to help us understand the bill better.

The Chair: Thank you. We'll make sure we get that information available to you.

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TOWNSHIP OF BROCK

The Chair: Our next delegation is the township of Brock. Good morning, and welcome. If you could identify yourself and anybody else who will be speaking, and the group that you're speaking for. When you do begin, you'll get 15 minutes. Should you use all of your time, there will no be opportunities for questions afterwards. I'll give you a one-minute warning when you get close.

Mr. Keith Shier: Thank you very much, Madam Chair and members of the standing of the committee. My name is Keith Shier. I'm mayor of Brock township. On behalf of the members of council, I am pleased to have this opportunity to appear before this committee and provide comments on Bill 135 as they impact the municipality. With me today is Mr. Thomas Gettinby, our deputy clerk administrator and former planner of our township.

Most of you know that Brock is a rural municipality, with a population of approximately 12,000 persons, located in the northeast corner of the greater Toronto area, on the east side of Lake Simcoe. About half of our residents live in the rural area; the other half live in three urban centres: Beaverton, Cannington and Sunderland.

We are proud of our ability to manage growth, and for the past 30 years we have followed the development principles that have been established by the province and set forth in the official plans for the region of Durham and the township of Brock.

Brock agrees that urban sprawl and the loss of productive farmland surrounding Toronto is a serious issue. However, Brock has not contributed to urban sprawl, as we do not face the same development pressures as our neighbours to the south and west. In fact, our building department only issued 24 housing permits last year.

We have reviewed the provisions of Bill 135 and the greenbelt plan and, while we are not philosophically opposed to this legislation, we do have some very serious concerns, as the bill contains some provisions that will limit our ability to plan appropriately for the future at the local level.

A moratorium on urban expansions for 10 years and the requirement that growth plans be completed by the

region appears to be inconsistent with Bill 26, which is intended to provide local planning autonomy to local municipalities. Bill 135 would remove our ability to plan for the future growth of our urban areas.

It is not appropriate that growth studies be completed at the regional level, as it does not respect local initiatives, and we do not believe it is fair to compare our land needs with the rest of the region, particularly the larger urban centres of Oshawa, Whitby, Ajax, and Pickering.

As an example, I would refer you to figure 1, the map attached at the back. The township is presently engaged in a local official plan review, and our residents have already spoken about an increased tax base through industry and commerce. Concurrently, the region of Durham is also reviewing its official plan and has recognized our need for rural employment areas.

The township completed an employment lands needs study in 2002, which was endorsed by council, and the area in yellow was identified as a potential industrial area, with commercial frontage along Highway 12. This area is five kilometres north of the intended terminus of Highway 404. This area was identified because most of the designated land in Beaverton is not suitable for development on full services because of its proximity to bedrock, such that it would not be economically feasible for development. In addition, most of our industry is small local people who do not require full municipal services, and having a small industrial subdivision with ready access to Highway 12 is much better planning than locating these uses sporadically throughout the countryside. It is also noted that this area is not within the prime agricultural area.

Many municipalities across Ontario have been able to take advantage of highway exposure in order to promote industrial and commercial development, and Brock would like the same opportunity to take advantage of Highway 12. Therefore, we are requesting that the committee amend the bill to permit an expansion of our urban areas, provided it is justified through a local planning initiative, e.g. a site-specific study and/or official plan review, without having to obtain approvals from the Lieutenant Governor in Council; and amend the bill to allow local municipalities to prepare growth studies and plans based on our local needs with the concurrence of the region, as opposed to the region completing such a study. I would note that the region would be involved in any event, since their official plan would have to be amended to recognize an expanded urban area. We believe this request is reasonable since the minister has previously stated that Bill 135 would respect local planning initiatives.

The wording of section 4.1 of the greenbelt plan also causes us some concern; specifically "commercial, industrial and institutional uses serving the agricultural and rural sectors." We are concerned that this clause could be interpreted rigidly, such that it may prevent certain types of development in the rural area, such as non-agricultural uses abutting Highway 12. Figure 1 also

shows the location of two development applications: a Tim Hortons and a 48,000-square-foot Loblaws grocery store. If Bill 135 is not amended to allow municipalities to review and adjust our urban area boundaries, we want the ability to consider these applications through the planning process. Therefore, we would request that the words “serving the agricultural and rural sectors” be removed in favour of the words “serving the community.”

The greenbelt plan would appear to permit the severance of a surplus farmhouse acquired through a farm consolidation, but only in the prime agricultural area. We believe that this type of severance should also be allowed in the rural and natural heritage system since agriculture is a permitted use in all three of these designations.

In conclusion, what the township is looking for in Bill 135 is flexibility, in order that we can effectively plan for the future.

We have started some exciting planning initiatives in response to the residents’ concerns that our non-residential tax base should be increased; that is why we completed an employment needs study in 2002, and we would like to implement this through our official plan review, which we expect to have completed by the end of this year.

We have an untapped resource in Highway 12, which already supports limited commercial development. The addition of a grocery store and a Tim Hortons, assuming they meet the tests of good planning, would complement this area and would provide over 200 jobs for our young people, which are much needed in our small township.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. If you have any questions, we will try to answer them.

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The Chair: You have left about two minutes per party, beginning with the official opposition.

Mr. Hudak: Thank you, Your Worship, for the presentation. I’m glad that you made the trip here today. I certainly enjoyed my visit with you and my colleague Laurie Scott to see this exact site a couple of weeks ago. You make excellent points that we support. I think it makes sense to take a close look at this situation.

What it illustrates is how this greenbelt plan has become a greenbotch. I mean, you’re stopping urban sprawl around Beaverton—you said that Brock township had 24 applications the entire year—but it allows wide-open sprawl all the way up to Barrie, which has actually been a problem. If you are a landowner on that stretch of Highway 400 up to Barrie, boy, you’ll get rich pretty fast, and that long line of traffic is just going to get longer under this greenbelt plan. But Highway 12 going into Beaverton—going to slow that right down.

It just shows how they have missed the targets. It was all done in their political platform when they made up the boundaries. There is growing evidence of a lack of faith in the science. I would say to my colleagues across the way that with so many mistakes like this in the greenbelt plan, if you undermine the credibility of a green initiative and it is not based on good science and thoughtfulness, it

will ultimately fail and unravel. That’s why we need to see the science and we need to make sure that there is a proper process to address silly situations like this and address the real issues of preserving space like Boyd conservation park, Marcy’s Woods, Pleasantview in Dundas, and really doing something about sprawl up the 400-series highways rather than stopping a Tim Hortons in Beaverton.

Tell us what this Tim Hortons and the grocery store mean for the community, for Beaverton and for Brock.

The Chair: You have about 30 seconds to do that answer.

Mr. Shier: There is already some commercial use in the area. There is an agricultural dealership just beyond that, a mile north, and there is a restaurant a little bit to the east. It is land that is not viable for agriculture, hasn’t been in my memory and will never be in the future, but it can be a boon to us.

Ms. Churley: Thank you very much for your presentation. One of the things we’ve heard a lot about is what’s been left out of the greenbelt and this so-called leapfrog development. We heard from someone yesterday who was saying that because of the belt that’s left out of the belt, that necklace that’s around it, more prime farmland has been left out than has been protected in it.

I’m a supporter of moving forward with the greenbelt. I think it’s absolutely critical that we start saving some of our environmentally sensitive land and prime farmland. I guess my question would be, would you support looking at putting those areas in? Because the scientific consensus is that we need to expand it.

Mr. Shier: Are you speaking of other areas beyond my own township?

Ms. Churley: Yes. Maybe that’s all that you’re looking at, but I guess I’m looking at the bigger picture and wondering where you sit with that.

Mr. Shier: When I look at other areas very close to us, just the other side of Lake Simcoe, for instance, or four kilometres east of us in the city of Kawartha Lakes, it’s free game there, but we are entirely restricted. It doesn’t make sense to me.

Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell): Thank you again, Your Worship, for taking the time to come and express your concerns about the greenbelt and the impact this would have on your municipality. We are here to discuss this plan. When I see that your local municipality is working on the next official plan, I do believe that you must be working on it with the Durham regional government, because there was a court case just lately with two municipalities and the official plan of the region superseding the official plan of the local municipalities. That was a court case that just came out from the OMB not too long ago.

You also stated that you have a Tim Hortons and a grocery store that are planned to be built along Highway 12. I do fully understand the impact this would have in your community, especially a Tim Hortons; everybody wants to stop there, and then they would go on to the grocery store. But in this case I strongly believe that you

would have to go back to your regional government and look at their official plan, because it is shown as open space at the present time. The official plan of the region has to look at it prior to your completing your own official plan, because otherwise you could end up in some difficulty. But I strongly believe that this greenbelt plan, or any other title you could use, should have come down a long time ago. Again, have you looked at the regional government of Durham's official plan to see if this could be accommodated? This greenbelt plan probably won't affect your development.

Mr. Shier: We hope not, and certainly we are trying to co-operate with the region and intend to fully co-operate with the region.

The Chair: Thank you, Mayor Shier, for coming today. We appreciate your time.

Mr. Shier: Thank you.

GREENBELT COALITION

The Chair: Our next delegation is the Greenbelt Coalition. Good morning. Could you please come forward? If you could identify who will be speaking today and the group that you're speaking for. When you've identified yourselves, I will time you for 15 minutes. Should you leave any time at the end, there will be an opportunity for us to ask questions.

Dr. Frank Clayton: OK. Thank you very much. My name is Frank Clayton. I'm president of Clayton Research, which is a real estate and urban economics firm. With me as well is Tom Hilditch, who is a senior ecologist and principal with Stantec Consulting, which is a large, multidisciplinary engineering and architectural firm. We're here on behalf of a recently formed group called the Greenbelt Coalition.

We're glad to be here to express our views on the proposed greenbelt legislation. We have some concerns with it and we hope we can improve the legislation. Our concern is that while it may be important to achieve environmental goals, one has to recognize that you have competing housing, agricultural and economic needs that should be considered as well.

In our view, the current legislation looks a little bit like an environmental Trojan Horse. On the surface it looks very, very favourable, but when you get behind it, there are a lot of concerns we have. I guess our suggestion is that you listen to some of our concerns and implement them in the final legislation or recommendations of the committee.

I'm not a lawyer, but we are very concerned about the taking away of rights of three key stakeholder groups: property owners, municipalities and citizens in general. The proposed Bill 135, if passed in its current form, removes a lot of rights for people in the greenbelt that they otherwise would have, and we are concerned about that.

My comments this morning are more concerned with the unintended—I'm assuming they're unintended—economic and social costs that are associated with the

greenbelt if it goes ahead as proposed. In my opinion, these costs may outweigh the benefits of a greenbelt.

What I would like to do in the few minutes I have is to give the committee members, for those of you who are not economists, a lesson in economics, Economics 101: the impact of greenbelts. These are not micro impacts; these are macro impacts.

If we have a demand situation that remains the same and supply is less than it otherwise would be, prices rise. That's a very simple, basic tenet of economics. If the greenbelt is effective and goes in as planned, prices of land inside the greenbelt will rise, no question about it. This will put pressure—which is desirable, I presume, indirectly—on densities in existing urban areas. But the pressure on densities is not just where you or municipalities might want to have greenbelts, because all land prices go up. Therefore, pressure is on densities. You can start seeing ratepayers getting upset because they might have more multiple housing in their neighbourhood and so on. Prices go up.

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Studies done for the province that came out two weeks ago show that roughly 43% of the housing under the current trends scenario to be built in the greater GTA/Hamilton area will be single detached houses; not 100%, not 80%, but 43%. A good segment of the population wants ground-related, single detached houses. If you put this greenbelt in, as it's effected, you will increase commuting from outside the greenbelt to jobs inside the greenbelt. That is an economic consequence.

Increased costs don't just affect housing, they affect everybody. Employment lands will go up in price. If employment lands go up in price, you risk losing major employers outside the greenbelt, outside Ontario, to other areas where the land costs are more reasonable.

Lastly, if house prices go up, and land prices and property values in general go up, there are wealth redistribution effects. On the housing side, who gets hurt by house prices going up? It's people who are not in the market today: teenagers living with their parents, renters, immigrants who will be coming to Toronto. These are the ones who get affected by higher house prices. We who own houses are going to get a windfall; it's wonderful. But there are distributional effects there that can add up to billions of dollars.

I just want the committee to be aware that there are economic implications to what's being proposed. I would hope that the committee would suggest that studies be done of these economic implications.

Mr. Tom Hilditch: Thank you, Frank. I'd like to spend a couple of minutes talking about the science behind the greenbelt. I'm a scientist and I've been involved in ecological planning and environmental assessment for about 24 years now. I've worked on natural heritage systems, designing them for municipalities in the province, and I also work extensively with the private sector.

We're hearing words like "the best science," "good science," "sound science." I'd like to first open with a

comment that it's very difficult for me as a scientist to understand the science behind the greenbelt because there is so little information available to be reviewed, to be critiqued and to look at carefully as it relates to the definition itself of the boundary. I understand the government has got Building the Greenbelt, and I've taken a look at that on the Web site as the latest background material for examination, but that, again, is fairly general. It's helpful, but it leaves scientists like me having a difficult time understanding the rationale behind the greenbelt boundary in many, many places.

I'll just offer five quick points on science that I'd like to leave you with. I do agree there have been a number of inconsistencies in the mapping. We've been pointing it out on a number of occasions. There is less attention paid, for example, to the Iroquois shoreline, although the text of the greenbelt plan talks about it. There are gaps in significant areas that occur in the Duffins watershed, for example, that need to be examined more carefully. And when we talk about protecting major river valleys, we've got a number of small, isolated tributaries contributing not to a provincial-level greenbelt, but they're identified in the plan.

There is a lack of definitions in the plan. "Key natural heritage features," "key hydrologic features," for example, aren't clearly defined.

There is concern about the mix of local significance with provincial significance. We suggest you continue to look very carefully at the provincial level of significance and not muddy the waters of the greenbelt with some of the local initiatives that are draft, unproven and untested out there by various agencies.

We certainly have a number of agricultural concerns. I'll finish with one more scientific comment and open it up to questions with some agricultural comments. There is a tendency to complex everything on the landscape and a tendency to protect everything. I believe, as a scientist, a provincial greenbelt needs to protect what is important at a provincial level, and I don't think it does that now.

In terms of agriculture, my final comment would be: If we're going to have permanent agricultural reserves and protect these reserves, we need to look at the functionality and viability of those. It's not just the land that we need to protect. Thank you.

The Chair: You've left two and a half minutes for each party to ask you a question, starting with Ms. Churley.

Ms. Churley: Your organization, I take it, is not to be confused with the Ontario Greenbelt Alliance. You're calling yourselves the Greenbelt Coalition.

Mr. Hilditch: That's correct.

Ms. Churley: Who are your members and who is funding your organization?

Dr. Clayton: We are on what we call the coalition advisory council. We're professionals and we're offering our input as citizens and members of the overall community. The coalition is made up of landowners that are affected. It's made up of farmer organizations—the

Ontario Federation of Agriculture. It's made up of some unions—the carpenters' union.

Ms. Churley: I just wondered why you call yourself the Greenbelt Coalition, because your recommendations seem to indicate that you don't support the greenbelt. I think it can be problematic in terms of the implications of the title.

I also wanted to ask you if you had hired—

Dr. Clayton: May I correct you? We do not come out and say we do not support a greenbelt. We do not support the greenbelt as it is being articulated at the present time.

Ms. Churley: OK, so you do support it.

Have you hired a fellow named Marcel Wieder as your public relations person?

Dr. Clayton: I believe he is a public relations person for the coalition, yes.

Ms. Churley: And you know about him being quite well known as a dirty tricks man, for building fake coalitions and putting them forward as real? I'm not making this up; I have the information before me.

Dr. Clayton: All I can say is that we're professionals. I met Marcel for the first time this morning. I do not know anything of his background other than he is in the public relations sort of business. So anything you have on him, I have no idea. We are here as professionals who are concerned about the greenbelt as it is being articulated.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Churley. The government side: Ms. Matthews.

Ms. Matthews: Hello; nice to see you both. I remember both of you from my life when I worked in the development business. I think it's only fair that people understand who you are and who you're representing and who is funding you. So can you, just for the record, tell us who's funding this organization?

Dr. Clayton: For the record, I cannot tell you who is funding the organization because we were asked to be on an advisory council as professionals who are concerned. I said yes because, as a professional, I've been trying to get the government to actually listen to some of the economic effects of what's going on. The minister, to the Greater Toronto Homebuilders, before I talked, made the comment that there will be no effect on prices. That is totally wrong and that's why I'm here today, because I believe there are going to be severe economic repercussions if it goes in, together with Places to Grow, as planned in the draft.

Mr. Hilditch: And my comment as well: I joined quite recently and agreed to join, like Frank, because I'm very concerned about the science and I have been for years. Putting forward the same comments, I'm here as a technical adviser and a professional. I'm not involved in fundraising or creating the organization.

Ms. Matthews: OK. Today I got a release that we have 75 independent scientists supporting the greenbelt.

I wonder if you can tell me how many independent scientists, and I stress "independent scientists," support your position.

Mr. Hilditch: I can't tell you on the ecological side. I have spoken with at least a dozen whom I work with in

the field of ecological planning and impact assessment who have very similar concerns about the greenbelt and don't feel it has the precision that it needs. I'm not sure which 75 scientists have come forward.

Ms. Matthews: I think the issues you've raised are important and we certainly will take them into consideration as we deliberate over this bill, but I do think it's important that people understand what interest you're representing. That's why I'm pursuing that line of questioning.

Mr. Yakabuski: Thank you very much, gentlemen, for joining us today. We choose not to question the credentials of people who come to make submissions before the committee. It's not our job. We understand that there are scientists who believe that the greenbelt is a great thing and there are scientists who believe that there is a lot of work to be done in this legislation, and we appreciate the opinions of them all.

One of the things that we have been saying from day one is that this will make home ownership, which is a dream for a lot of young people, remain just that—a dream. Traditionally, the other parties like to occupy the role of saying, "We're the defenders of the poor, and those damn Tories, all they care about is those rich people." I think there's clear evidence to show that under this legislation the rich will get richer and those who currently do not own a home will have a much harder time achieving that goal.

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If we hypothetically said that the odds of young people today, starting out in their 20s and just starting to raise a family, owning their own home in the next 10 years were one in five, what do you think those odds would be with this greenbelt legislation, as it is currently drafted? I want to make very clear, as well, sir, that we also believe in protection of green space, protection of the environment. We just believe that this draft plan was so hurriedly rushed out for political reasons that it simply misses the mark. Could you give me your opinion on those odds?

Dr. Clayton: First of all, you can't look at the greenbelt in isolation. You have to look at all the land-use planning reforms being proposed by the government, including the growth management strategy, changes to the Ontario Municipal Board and so on. You have to look at it as a package. But definitely, house prices will be higher. My best estimate right now is that over the next 10 years prices will probably be about third higher than they would otherwise, if this plan goes ahead as it is. This will mean that first-time buyers and immigrants coming into Toronto—immigrants, renters who are renters now and children of people who are homeowners—would have to pay, over the next 10 years, something like \$29 billion more for their housing. At the same time, the rest of us benefit because we're homeowners. That's the kind of very massive, social wealth redistribution that can occur because of this legislation, if it goes into effect as it is currently articulated.

The Chair: Thank you, gentlemen. Thank you very much for your delegation. We appreciate your being here.

FRIENDS OF THE ROUGE WATERSHED
ROUGE DUFFINS
GREENSPACE COALITION

The Chair: Our next delegation is the Rouge Duffins Greenspace Coalition. Good morning.

Mr. Jim Robb: Good morning, Madam Chair.

The Chair: It still is morning—yes. Welcome. Once the hubbub has died down, could you identify yourself and the group that you represent? When you begin speaking, you'll have 15 minutes. Should you leave time at the end, there will be opportunities for questions. I'll try and give you a one-minute warning as you get close, if you go that long.

Mr. Robb: Thank you. My name is Jim Robb. I'm appearing with two hats today. One is as a staff person, a general manager with Friends of the Rouge Watershed, which is a non-profit group that has planted over 200,000 trees and wild flowers and has involved more than, I believe, 12,000 young people in the last five years in conservation activities in the Rouge Park. I'm also a volunteer with a non-profit group called the Rouge Duffins Greenspace Coalition, which is a coalition of conservation and community groups located in the Rouge and Duffin watersheds.

I've handed out a number of documents that I'd like to make reference to today. The first one has the little frog on it, which is the logo of Friends of the Rouge. Could I also get you to just pull out the map and have it handy; I may refer to this map. I apologize for it not being in colour. It's at the back of your document.

A little bit in terms of my background: My background is U of T, forestry and environmental sciences. I've worked on watershed issues for over 20 years. I was a member of the Ontario Environmental Assessment Board, appointed by the David Peterson government from 1990 to 1996, so I've worked right from the grassroots level to the policy level.

The first thing I would like to address is the vision and legacy. I have a real concern that the vision of this being a wonderful legacy that the Premier has enunciated could be lost and diluted by very short-sighted and greedy interests. There are a lot of interests that need to be balanced here, but if you're going to do a vision, you need to look carefully at the presentations made by Environmental Defence, Pembina Institute and Ontario Nature. I think those presentations represent the vision of this document and the legacy that I think we would all like to leave.

When we're talking about increasing housing prices, that may be true for 50- and 60-foot lots in the suburbs, which very few young people are going to be able to afford. If you create this greenbelt, it will enhance the quality of life in the GTA for future generations for many years, if you do a good job on it, and it will protect the

quality of life here for the next generation. It may increase—

Interjections.

The Chair: There is a lot of commotion in the room, and the door is opening. Could people please give attention to this delegation. Thank you.

Mr. Robb: Thank you, Madam Chair.

It may increase property values for those large, big lots that are eating up our farmland and green space, but it's more likely to provide incentives for smart growth within our cities. There are many reasons why we need to incent that smart growth. One of them is, I heard Minister Sorbara talking about how bad our infrastructure is, how much we need renewal and how much we're having trouble finding the money. One of the ways we'll find the money is by intensification within the existing urban envelope. When we up-zone and redevelop areas and encourage not speculation on greenfields but investment in rundown areas, we will be able to find money through development charges to renew our infrastructure and make our existing cities sustainable. If we don't find a way to do that, we will have the kind of rot in our core and the kind of social and environmental malaise that will kill this golden goose of the country of Canada. So we need the GTA, economically, socially and environmentally. We need the greenbelt. We need it to be strong and robust.

I'd like to address a few areas of the greenbelt: the Duffins Rouge ag preserve. There has been a lot of misleading information brought forward on this, and I have provided to you a document in blue. I won't go through the full thing, but it summarizes the last 30 years of planning, with direct quotes from documents.

The developers have told you, for instance, that there's no science for protecting the ag preserve; that's not true. In 1997, the Ministry of Natural Resources commissioned Geomatics, which is a very highly respected environmental studies and mapping group, to do a study on the Rouge and Duffins. Their number one recommendation was that the Duffins Rouge ag preserve be left intact as a crucial area for wildlife within the Rouge Duffins area.

Another point is that in ecological science there is a principle called SLOSS: single large or several small. In general, a large area like the Rouge Duffins and the Duffins Rouge ag preserve is much more robust long-term. If it's large, it sustains its species, it's more beautiful for the public, it offers more environmental infrastructure benefits such as clean water and clean air. That's what we're trying to do in the area of the Rouge Duffins. We're trying to link the Duffins and the Rouge and we're trying to connect the lake and the moraine.

If you look at your GTA greenbelt map, you'll see this beautiful green connector, the Niagara Escarpment, on the west end, but if you look over in the east end, there aren't really a lot of connectors. So the Duffins Rouge ag preserve, Seaton and the federal lands that are there are vital to that.

I've gone into more detail that I hope you'll have a chance to look at, but the Duffins Rouge ag preserve is a

can of worms politically if anybody tries to open it up for development. The Premier has promised in writing—and I'll refer you to this document; it was in the Liberal platform—that all of the Duffins Rouge ag preserve would be added to the GTA greenbelt and that two thirds of Seaton would be added. Those are promises we take seriously. We think they are issues of credibility. They were good initiatives and good promises by the Premier; they should be followed through.

We're happy that the Duffins Rouge ag preserve is within the draft greenbelt area. We're a little bit concerned that two thirds of Seaton isn't in the greenbelt area. The Premier promised that also, and we'd like to see those two thirds of the lands in Seaton, which should be protected, be in the greenbelt area.

We believe that when the Seaton lands are swapped and there's the sale of those lands, we've been told that even after the swap with the Oak Ridges moraine, there'll be some additional lands. We believe the revenue generated through the sale of those additional lands should actually be used to purchase back the Duffins Rouge ag preserve lands.

What's happened to those lands is that developers, through what we consider to be rather questionable side deals, got control of them. The Duffins Rouge ag preserve were public lands sold for \$4,000 an acre. Why were they sold that cheap? Because they had permanent agricultural easements registered on title. What the developers have done is made a side deal, because the developers couldn't buy it for that. The only reason the government sold it that cheap is because of these easements. They made an agreement with the region, the local municipality, to keep them agricultural, so they slapped on easements. The farmers and the people there said, "We can't afford to farm lands and buy at more than \$4,000," so they got that land at \$4,000, which is actually what the government purchased it for 30 years ago.

They got a good deal. They shouldn't have made side deals with the developers. The developers should not now get this windfall. If you let the DRAP be developed, what will happen is it will be a rip-off of the public purse of something like \$300 million to half a billion dollars, because they will have got 3,000 acres of public land for \$4,000 an acre when if they had purchased it on the market, it would have been \$150,000 an acre. So don't go near that one. I could tell you all kinds of stuff, but there's really some very questionable and unethical content there.

1150

Now, the people before you were this Greenbelt Coalition. I can tell you about sham groups set up in Pickering that are coming before you. In the last election they put \$30,000 to \$50,000 through these sham groups to fix the outcome of the election, and they were effective. They actually elected the person who was supportive of their plans and unelected someone who wasn't supportive of their plans. Regardless of where you stand—Liberal, Conservative, NDP—that's really a distortion of public process, and I find it very disturbing.

We have a lot of evidence on that and we'd be happy to present that further.

I guess the last point I'll make, because time is brief, is that I think you have a win-win situation here, and I hope you'll listen carefully to this. The environmental groups and people who are thinking in the long term are saying, "Protect all that land from the Oak Ridges moraine to the urban envelope and from the Niagara Escarpment to the urban envelope." I totally agree with that. I recognize that the government may be reluctant to do that in one step. What I suggest you do is keep the moratorium on for a minimum of 10 to 20 years. During that time, address the science issue.

I would agree with the developers on one part of their argument: We could benefit from some more science in those shadow areas, the ones between the Oak Ridges moraine, before we actually define them as greenbelt. Where will you get that science? The conservation authorities are currently doing watershed strategies. They should finish those and they should enhance them with subwatershed. The conservation authorities are doing natural heritage systems studies. They should finish those and they should look at them carefully.

We've delineated those scientific steps that need to be taken. If you give a moratorium for 10 years, there's plenty of land to be taken up in that period that's already zoned. There's a real need to get developers and speculators to think within the urban envelope more, rather than outside, and there's a real need to bring the science forward.

I know that Environment Canada has already done studies that say we can't have healthy water in our streams and lakes unless we have 30% to 35% forest cover. The town of Markham, for instance, and the headwaters of the Rouge have less than 5%. There's not much more room in the Rouge before you run out of land, and you can never reach that 30%.

We also have climate change. You've seen what happened in Peterborough. I've spoken to top meteorologists, and they say that with climate change we need to re-examine our flood control systems and our buffers, and we haven't done that yet. So that's another thing that needs to be looked at.

My suggestion to you is, continue that moratorium for at least 10 years. During that period, invest in good science, in good studies of those areas between the moraine and the existing urban envelope that aren't within the green plan already, and let's do this right. I can tell you right now, my gut feeling is that those areas—most of them—will be included after a science-based study because it's the only way you'll get to the 30% forest cover in watersheds; it's the only way you'll dampen the effects of climate change; it's the only way we'll protect water quality, quality of air and quality of life in the GTA.

I'm happy to answer any questions, but I hope you have a chance to take a look at our comments. In general, we're very supportive of what has been stated by the other major groups—the Pembina Institute, Ontario Nature, and Environmental Defence.

I'd also add just one point: There is currently a project in the Rouge that's going to potentially drain the moraine of 30 billion litres of water, creating a hole in the moraine of 300 square kilometres that stretches from the top of the moraine to Highway 401 and from Pickering to Richmond Hill. I think that York region, just like the developers are doing here, has misled the government on that one and I think they're leading the government to potential slaughter before the next election, because the real problem with that moraine drain will really be serious just before the next election. Hundreds of wells will be dry, dozens of streams and wetlands will be dry, and it'll be all over the newspapers. So I'd ask you to think carefully about those two issues and I thank you for the opportunity.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Robb. You've left one minute for each party to ask you a question, beginning with Mr. Duguid.

Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre): One minute is probably not enough for me to ask this entire question, but I'll do the best I can.

Thank you for our work on the Rouge reserve and all that stuff. You've done some great work out there. You are a real expert in ecological matters when it comes to using science. The opposition is trying to use science as a reason for us not to proceed with the greenbelt at all. I would suggest that we've used science to identify where the greenbelt should go, and mapping—the same science was used on the Oak Ridges moraine, the same science that would be used anywhere.

You were talking about the 150,000 or so acres that are slated for potential development and you say you'd like to see more science there. With the rest of the greenbelt, would you suggest that the science has been adequate for us to proceed?

Mr. Robb: Yes. I think the government's on a strong footing both from a policy perspective and from an environmental perspective. I do think, though, that to address some of the issues in the remaining lands that need to be added or should be added, that one of the ways you can go about it is to complete these other studies. But I think the government is on strong footing from environmental science and from policy.

I actually would turn around the onus. Developers pay for so-called scientists, and I consider them hired guns. They are not independent university scientists. They are hired guns. The envelope in any environmental issue is wide so that you can drag it one way or the other because the science isn't that precise. So I think you're on strong footing, but if you aren't willing to declare those areas between the Oak Ridges moraine and the existing urban envelope greenbelt at this time, which I think you should, then you really need to extend the moratorium and do further scientific review before you allow any urban expansion.

Mr. Yakabuski: Thank you very much for your presentation. I certainly thank the government side for the lesson in science because they are the experts at political science.

Again, you've taken parts of the greenbelt legislation and you say that you agree with them, but on the other hand, there are some glaring gaps and some glaring weaknesses. So we have to be willing to at least say that they didn't do the job right; they haven't got it right. They haven't put the science into it; otherwise, we wouldn't have you presenting today, telling us what the weaknesses are and what the gaps are. You may substantively agree with some of the things they're doing—and we do as well; we agree with the general principle of protecting environmentally sensitive lands and green space—but this government has not gotten it right.

When you make gravy, if you don't have a good base, you can thicken it up with some Liberal political flour, but it's still going to be lousy gravy. So this is what they've done. They have what they think is a good start. They've thickened it up with their politics but they don't have a plan that's going to work. We're asking them—and I think to some degree, you agree. They have to go back and restudy this thing. Don't rush into this; let's get it right. Would that be a fair statement?

The Chair: I'm sorry, sir; you have no opportunity to respond now.

Ms. Churley, it's your turn.

Interjections.

Ms. Churley: Don't even get me started on my gravy.

Nice to see you. I've seen you in action, and you're as fearless as I am in terms of exposing what we believe to be more development-driven bogus kinds of studies. Having said that, I will tell you this: We're getting all hung up on what's legitimate science and what isn't. There's a scientific consensus that says that we need to expand the greenbelt. That consensus is there.

Within any scientific study there are going to be pieces—and we hear about it—that are going to be done wrong. There's absolute evidence of that; no question. I have some problems, too, with some of the pieces that are being left out, and I think it is for political reasons; no question about it. But overall, we have a political consensus that we need to expand the kind of things you're talking about.

Mr. Robb: I would agree with that. I think you move forward now on what you've already put on the table. You expand it, if you are able to, before you move forward. This is why I'm suggesting this moratorium and let's study those other areas further. I don't think it's big enough. I don't think it goes out far enough, it won't prevent leapfrogging, and it's not big enough to protect the integrity of our air, water and farmland. There's too much left out. But I think it's a good first step. Let's move forward and let's make it better.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Robb. Thank you very much for your time. We appreciate your being here today.

SUNFISH LAKE ASSOCIATION

The Chair: Our next delegation is the Sunfish Lake Association. Since we're between good morning and

good afternoon, I'll offer you both. Welcome. We appreciate your being here. After you've identified yourself and told us the group you're speaking for, you'll be timed for 15 minutes. If you leave an opportunity at the end, we'll be able to ask you questions, and if you go too long, I'll give you a one-minute warning.

1200

Mr. Kevin Thomason: Honourable members of the committee and guests, my name is Kevin Thomason and I am lucky to be a landowner and live on Sunfish Lake, a rare meromictic lake located on the Waterloo moraine at the edge of the cities of Kitchener-Waterloo. I am here in my capacity as president of the Sunfish Lake Association, and I believe my presentation represents my own views as well as the views of our association and a great many people in our community.

First of all, thank you. I'm very appreciative of the opportunity to be able to speak this morning and I'd like to make clear our support for Bill 135. It is visionary and seems to be well thought out, taking into account many diverse needs and considerations. We thank you for the tremendous work that has been done over many years to create this act and we commend you for protecting the Oak Ridges moraine, the Niagara Escarpment and other key natural areas facing tremendous development pressures.

I believe that the provincial government, as well as the half a million residents of Waterloo region, have a common vision of a vibrant, dynamic and sustainable urban community, protected and balanced by natural greenbelt and rural areas. Waterloo region is one of the fastest growing communities in all of North America. Both the cities of Kitchener and Waterloo have been experiencing tremendous development pressures and have been identified in the recent Places to Grow strategy as priority urban growth centres for the greater Golden Horseshoe. While our region was considered part of the greater Golden Horseshoe for Places to Grow, we were considered outside the Golden Horseshoe for the greenbelt plan area. So our area is now in the challenging situation of being targeted for a lot of growth and development by one act, yet not being afforded any of the protection being given to other rapidly growing parts of the GTA by the Greenbelt Act.

You are well aware of the concerns of leapfrogging and the possibility of having the proposed Greenbelt Act push development pressures out on to outlying areas around Toronto. We are concerned that, in addition to all of the planned growth for our region under Places to Grow, we could now face yet even more development pressure from leapfrogging.

Our region is home to the Waterloo moraine, the Paris-Galt moraine, many provincially significant wetlands and numerous environmentally sensitive areas. For years now, myself and hundreds of other area residents have been fighting developments and subdivisions proposed to be built atop the Waterloo moraine as the city of Waterloo, facing significant growth pressures, expands westward on to this sensitive area.

According to Professor Alan Morgan, a world-renowned hydrogeologist, more people are dependent on the smaller Waterloo moraine for their drinking water than the much more extensive Oak Ridges moraine, and unlike most municipalities in the province, the cities of Kitchener-Waterloo have no Great Lakes or other large bodies of water to draw upon for our drinking water. We are the largest community in Canada dependent on groundwater for our water needs. The fragile Waterloo moraine is straining to keep up with our water demands. Just yesterday in the newspaper, Waterloo region officials were predicting water shortages for the next two years because of well closures where parts of our water supply have become damaged and contaminated. Each acre of development on our moraine threatens our water supply even more.

Aside from protecting the moraine, the only other alternative for water is a large, expensive pipeline to the Great Lakes, potentially costing billions of dollars, perhaps even having to come from provincial government budgets. It remains to be seen if we would even be allowed to draw fresh water out of the Great Lakes under the free trade agreement and if the United States would allow us to pump it the vast distances required.

In response to these challenges, and because of our desire to protect our natural areas, our rural municipalities, our prime agricultural lands and our Mennonite communities, the region of Waterloo has proposed potentially extending the Golden Horseshoe greenbelt westward from Hamilton to include a vast swath of our region. For those of you not familiar with Waterloo region, the area the region has proposed as an extension of the greenbelt, and has been working for several years to protect, includes diverse forests, significant wetlands, and dozens of creeks, streams and tributaries. It also includes two moraines, a number of lakes and parts of the Grand River, the first river designated as a heritage river in Canada.

These spectacular natural areas are home to rare and endangered species of plants, amphibians, birds and mammals. Bald eagles, osprey, herons, kingfishers, otters, foxes, deer and many other animals make their homes here in these natural areas, sometimes just minutes from our urban settlements. Even as I write this presentation, there's a group of coyotes excitedly howling outside my window, and under the ice of Sunfish Lake right beside my house, thousands of fish, turtles and frogs await spring. Yet I'm located just a few minutes from downtown Waterloo, with its large insurance organizations, universities and high-tech companies.

Waterloo agricultural land is often considered some of the best in the country, and both traditional farming communities and Mennonite communities have always thrived in our area. People consistently rank our region as one of the best places to live because of the high quality of life, the easy access to the countryside and rural character, the nearby farmers markets etc. We enjoy a healthy and balanced lifestyle and believe our area would be an outstanding addition to the greenbelt and would

complement what you've already worked so hard to protect. Extending the greenbelt into Waterloo region affords us the same protection as other communities facing significant development pressures. The region of Waterloo has been a leader in planning for decades, starting with official policy plans, the countryside line concept and, more recently, the regional growth management strategy and our greenlands strategy.

Much work and research has already been undertaken on these initiatives and the amount of work required to include the Waterloo region in the Greenbelt Act may not be as daunting as it seems at first. Our cities have adopted "environment first" policies, our rural townships have always had an approach to development and preservation that has limited speculation, and the additional protection from Bill 135 would reinforce our local and regional efforts and ensure the support required to protect our rural areas and build strong urban communities.

Lands and water are a provincial jurisdiction and the people of Waterloo would like very much to have the province help us protect our natural areas and resources and appropriately guide future growth in our region. Later this afternoon, you'll hear from Ken Seiling, our regional chairman, who will address how the province's approach complements the efforts already underway in our region and how all we can all benefit by working together.

In fact, I would refer to this as 1+1=3: Our region benefits from the protection and guidance of the Greenbelt Act; the act becomes stronger and more successful because leapfrogging may be thwarted in this part of the province; and the addition of thousands of protected acres strengthens the entire greenbelt.

I believe that all major growth areas in the province need the same level of consideration for protection. The citizens of Waterloo region are optimistic that the Greenbelt Act can encompass our region. However, if for some reason we cannot be included in Bill 135, we would like to know how we can work with the provincial government and how you can help to ensure that we get the protection we need.

I recently returned from California, where I saw first-hand the tale of two cities: Los Angeles, with endless urban sprawl for 100 kilometres in any direction, massive smog problems, dreadful urban decay in South LA, industrial wastelands in Long Beach, countless freeways and continuous traffic jams. Contrasting this, just up the coast is the nearby vibrant city of San Francisco, the number one tourist attraction in the United States. Surrounded by massive greenbelt natural preserves such as the Golden Gate national recreation area, the Presidio, wetland bird sanctuaries, sweeping natural beaches and coastlines, no one in San Francisco is more than a 15-minute bicycle ride from great natural areas. San Francisco has wonderful urban neighbourhoods and has one of the most successful public transit systems in the US.

The San Francisco economy is booming. It is home to world-class educational institutions such as Berkeley and

Stanford and it has been able to accommodate the tremendous growth of Silicon Valley without compromising the surrounding natural preserves. Thank goodness for the Berkeley hippies and tree-huggers of the 1960s. Their quest for the protection of these lands has created one of the healthiest, most successful and desirable cities in the world. I would like to make sure that our future looks more like San Francisco, surrounded by greenbelts, than Los Angeles.

In conclusion, we are very pleased with the initiatives and the direction of the provincial government and are encouraged by the bold steps being taken with Bill 135. It is the right thing to do and future generations will applaud your actions. The residents of Waterloo region are working hard to try to ensure the best possible future for our region. Our inclusion in the Greenbelt Act would allow us to become even stronger advocates of the act, providing more momentum and helping to propel it forward. We believe that our unique and spectacular natural areas, Mennonite farms and rural areas of Waterloo would make a wonderful addition to the Golden Horseshoe greenbelt.

Much work has already been done and we hope you embrace the proposal from the region of Waterloo. We are looking forward to working with you to complete the greenbelt and hope that our area can continue to grow in a healthy, balanced fashion and remain one of the economic, educational and technological drivers of the provincial economy.

Thank you. I welcome any questions.

The Chair: Thank you for your presentation. You've left two minutes for each party, beginning with the official opposition.

Mr. Hudak: Thank you very much for the presentation. Ted Arnott, one of the local members, had recommended you to the committee, so I know he's familiar with the work of the Sunfish Lake Association. My sister lives in Waterloo, as a matter of fact, and loves the community. It ain't Niagara, but it's very nice.

How do you suggest we marry the two? You talked a bit about Places to Grow and growth. Clearly we do need a place for new jobs. We need to keep Ontario firing and growing and creating wealth. How would you reconcile the need to protect sensitive areas while making sure we still allow affordable housing and job creation?

1210

Mr. Thomason: I believe that the proposal put forward by the region of Waterloo does a good job of balancing that. It allows two thirds of our region to be areas for future development. It appropriately guides development to those areas, while also protecting the essential areas. In Waterloo region, we find that the environmental areas, the moraines and such, are predominantly on the west side of the city, while a lot of the development and the demand for the development happens to be happening on the east side of the city: Cambridge, Waterloo, Kitchener and surrounding the airport. So I think we have a very easy plan that allows us to move forward in a balanced fashion, to protect the

valuable areas while also promoting strong economic growth in the other areas.

Mr. Hudak: In terms of moving forward, if other areas of the province are examined, you talked about the work that Waterloo has done. We'll hear from the chair shortly. What's the best way, I guess, to move forward in these types of initiatives? Who should you include in this type of process?

Mr. Thomason: It's a good question. I know we were virtually excluded from the first version of Bill 135. We're seeking to be included in it now. There's been talk of a necklace or a phase 2 or a second version. I don't know how long that will be or how long that process may take. Our concern is, we're facing the development pressures and growth pressures now, and the development is happening now. We need the answers, and we're willing to work with everyone now. We hope that this issue and our future is important enough that everyone will work together on this: every ministry, every political party, and all people can come together and do the right thing.

The Chair: Thank you. Ms. Churley, you have the floor. Two minutes.

Ms. Churley: Thanks for your presentation. On page 3 of your submission, you talk about the region considered part of the Golden Horseshoe for Places to Grow but considered outside for the purposes of the greenbelt.

Mr. Thomason: Right.

Ms. Churley: You talk about that it's already targeted for a lot of growth and development. Are you seeing, since the introduction of the greenbelt and moving toward passage, a lot more applications for development and things like that already happening?

Mr. Thomason: A little bit, but not as much as other areas. Frankly, we're lucky. A number of the municipalities in our area have always had a very consistent approach to development. There has not been a lot of speculation and a lot of things that have happened in other areas in our area because of their very consistent approach, so we may not be as affected as other areas. That doesn't mean it isn't going to happen; it may mean that it's a little bit easier to include us and have things move forward a little bit faster, just because this is very consistent with what's been going on in our region and what the region has been trying to build on its own for some time now.

Ms. Churley: Municipal Leaders for the Greenbelt have come forward and said—and I don't know if you support them on that—that although they support the greenbelt, if it's not expanded, “urban sprawl will continue to spread like a cancer in the GTA, with disastrous consequences to our clean air, clean water, wildlife and our children.” Generally, that's my position too: We have to expand it. Is that yours?

Mr. Thomason: Yes. Again, learning from the Los Angeles example—it can sprawl forever—I think that we need to create a strong greenbelt, and perhaps model the San Francisco idea, where the greenbelt was created with such significant size that it prevented the leapfrogging and has instead created a very balanced, very vibrant community.

Ms. Churley: Good. Thank you very much.

Mr. Rinaldi: Thanks very much, Mr. Thomason, for being here today. "Thinking forward," I guess, is probably the best way to describe your presentation. I'm going to make more of a comment than a question, but maybe you can address it. I think the area of Kitchener-Waterloo has certainly shown leadership. With the Places to Grow legislation—with the help of the other side, hopefully we can get it through this summer—Kitchener-Waterloo is really an example, how they've managed their growth. I believe some of the questions that you've asked about, "Let's get the greenbelt in Kitchener-Waterloo to prevent sprawl"—I don't know if you've had an opportunity to review our discussion papers, but I think you're going to find that Places to Grow provides that some of those things will go hand in hand with the greenbelt to prevent those things, to increase intensification.

I guess the other comment I'd like to make is that it's great to have you come here today, on behalf of your community, wanting to expand the greenbelt. I think what we're talking about today is really legislation to allow governments to be able to do that down the road. It's not where the line is today, where the line is right, wrong or in-between. If Kitchener-Waterloo is not in the first round, for lack of a better word, I'm sure with submissions like you have and that I'm sure we'll hear down the road, we'll have legislation in place to make it happen a lot quicker.

I don't know if there's time for comment or not on your part.

The Chair: You have time to comment.

Mr. Thomason: Great. We very much believe there needs to be a balance. We're very much hoping the province will be able to help us achieve the balance and the goals for our region for both growth and protection of our natural areas. Whether that happens now or in the future, the growth is certainly happening now and the development pressures are happening now. We would hope for the provincial government to help now. On the other hand—as you'll see later this afternoon with Ken Seiling—the regional government has been a leader in trying for this balanced growth, and we'll continue our best efforts in the meantime.

The Chair: Thank you very much for coming. Be careful about those coyotes outside your window.

Mr. Thomason: They're wonderful. Thank you for the opportunity.

COALITION OF CONCERNED CITIZENS

The Chair: Our next delegation is the Coalition of Concerned Citizens.

Ms. Lorraine Symmes: With me is Bob Gardiner, who is also a director of the Coalition of Concerned Citizens. He's just going to be part of the question and answer part.

The Chair: All right. Could you identify yourself and your organization before you begin, when you get com-

fortable. When you begin, I'll start the timer. If you use all of your time, then there won't be an opportunity for questions, but I'll give you a warning if you get close. Welcome.

Ms. Symmes: I'm Lorraine Symmes, speaking on behalf of the Coalition of Concerned Citizens.

Madam Chair and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to present our concerns to you in regard to the province's proposed greenbelt plan. We commend the province for its initiatives in the planning process, and we are pleased to be a part of the dialogue promoting change.

The Coalition of Concerned Citizens is a non-profit citizens' group formed in Caledon in 1997, which has grown to over 5,000 supporters today. Our goal is to ensure good land use planning by protecting Caledon's water, environment and communities from the threats of inappropriate urban and aggregate development.

Caledon has been blessed with many significant natural resources: the Niagara Escarpment, the Oak Ridges moraine, the sensitive headwaters of four major rivers and many acres of prime agricultural land, all in close proximity to the GTA. Perhaps the confluence of these significant natural features has motivated the town to develop land use policies ahead of its time. But whatever the reason, both the citizenry and the municipality have done their homework prior to the greenbelt draft legislation. This leads us to the coalition's first and foremost concern.

Good planning needs to be at the heart of any project, large or small. Good planning at any governmental level also requires that the needs of a diverse group of stakeholders be recognized. For it to be successful in both the short and the long term, it must take a balanced approach to policy matters so that the interests of all major stakeholders are considered and respected.

This process of good planning took place during the development of Caledon's OPA 161, which provides detailed policies for the sound management of the aggregate resources within the town of Caledon. Through a precedent-setting agreement with all stakeholders involved—including the province, the region, the town, the Niagara Escarpment Commission, the aggregate producers and Caledon residents—a balanced agreement was reached with significant financial and temporal cost to all. We call on the province to honour this signed agreement, a commitment made in good faith by all parties at the table. The true cost of not honouring it could be very high indeed.

Our second major concern has to do with source water protection. The province is going in the right direction with the addition of protection for water resource systems, but they have not gone far enough. Aggregate operations can have devastating impacts on the quality and quantity of water resources. Yet with the information released so far, it looks as though it's business as usual for aggregate producers. This greenbelt plan may have the very effect of moving more extraction into areas that are the sensitive headwaters of the major river systems of

the Great Lakes basin. Extraction should not be at the expense of our groundwater supply. Therefore, we recommend that aggregate development should not be permitted in key natural heritage and hydrological features. In addition, stronger wording needs to be written into the plan covering protection of groundwater sources, major aquifers, recharge areas and key forest cover. Only by doing this will water resources be protected and maintained for the increased future consumption planned in the GTA.

1220

The third concern we have is in regard to the rehabilitation of pits and quarries. Historically, the province has not maintained the rigorous standard needed for aggregate rehabilitation. We support undertakings to embed rehabilitation in the greenbelt plan. However, the best planning in the world is meaningless unless it is accompanied by a legal structure that ensures it will be implemented on a timetable agreed to by the community and enforced properly.

The examples of unrehabilitated pits and quarries are legion, despite provincial rules. In the year 2002, only 3% of disturbed aggregate land was rehabilitated. Unfortunately, this is not an unusual occurrence. Historically, the aggregate producers in Ontario have been permitted to operate under a laissez-faire policy, with the result that they are not viewed as good corporate citizens in their communities. How do you propose to ensure that the current situation is not continued? For it is unsustainable.

Perhaps some other independent agency could be tasked with working with the municipalities to bring action against those companies that violate the regulations. Such an agency should be required to make a public report via municipal councils and local media on an annual basis. We recommend that a more transparent and accountable extraction management process be put in place to establish more trust between the community, the province and the aggregate industry. Good intentions are not enough.

The final point we would like to make concerns a provincial aggregate conservation strategy. If the Greenbelt Act, which is an environmental act to encourage conservation—and that's a good thing—allows the possibility of mineral aggregate extraction within its boundaries, then the province must begin with a publicly available current inventory of the supply of mineral aggregates in Ontario. This needs to be developed by the government and not developed, as it is currently, by the industry-owned Ontario Aggregate Resource Corp. This is like putting the fox in charge of the chickens.

Gordon Miller, the Environmental Commissioner, wrote in a recent article on aggregates, that the Ministry of Natural Resources “has no accurate picture of what is happening in terms of demand ... nor does it have an up-to-date picture of what kind of aggregates are being used, or how and where they are being used in Ontario,” and finally, “nor do we know how much can still be extracted from existing pits and quarries.”

The Pembina Institute wrote in their January 2005 report on aggregates that's just come out that “the government of Ontario does not have a long-term strategy to reduce the impacts of mineral aggregate (i.e. gravel, sand and stone) extraction on drinking water, source water and other important environmental assets. It also lacks basic information on the state and consumption of the province's aggregate resources.”

Clearly, we have a serious problem where good planning is concerned if we do not have the basic information available upon which we are able to make rational decisions. Therefore, we recommend that a publicly available assessment be undertaken by the province to determine the current aggregate demand and supply in Ontario before new extraction be allowed into the greenbelt.

The aggregate industry deflects any questioning of their practices with claims that the “sky is falling” over reserves. The real issue is not whether we need aggregate; of course we do. The real issue is how the producers and the province manage the resource extraction. Public trust has been lost through the poor practices of an effectively self-regulated industry. Before we allow the aggregate producers access to the greenbelt, the coalition maintains that there needs to be reform and a clear strategy for aggregate conservation.

How are these things all tied together? In the end, it's all about good planning within the greenbelt. Caledon's OPA 161 represents an agreement that came about through an extensive consultative process, and committed to by all parties. It is extremely important that this work not be diluted or undone by any interpretation of Bill 135. Thank you.

The Chair: You've left about two minutes for each party, beginning with Ms. Churley.

Ms. Churley: Thank you very much, and I'm so glad you're here raising this issue, which is one of my pet peeves about this piece of legislation. In fact, you mention the Pembina Institute's study. It says that it perhaps gives gravel pits priority over almost every other land use and could seriously undermine the province's attempts to preserve open countryside, drinking water and natural heritage for generations to come; and that by some people's measures, it could be easier to build a pit mine inside the greenbelt than outside.

Those are pretty damning words and of great, great concern. So it does sound like you share the concerns I've expressed: that without the amendments to change that, the greenbelt could become a gravel belt. That's the way I referred to it.

I have a lot of questions around it. Obviously we need that changed, we need that amendment made, and I'll be putting that forward. Would you support perhaps an increase in the fee per tonne on aggregates to fund research and aggregate recycling and substitutes? As you pointed out, government and the industry needs to be doing far more in that area.

Ms. Symmes: We would totally support, and it's long overdue, an increase in the tonnage, because what we're

doing is subsidizing. Whenever something is underpriced comparative to other jurisdictions—the UK is C\$4 a tonne and Sweden is C\$1 a tonne—it gets wasted. That's what's happening. We are wasting our resources, with a huge impact on the environment.

Ms. Churley: It's so easy for them. There's not enough pressure there and not enough legislation, regulations, assistance or whatever from the government to force that recycling and substitution—the things that have to happen.

Ms. Symmes: Absolutely. There has to be an incentive for them to be more efficient and to not just pull it out of the ground, never rehabilitate—I shouldn't say “never rehabilitate,” but do a very low rate of rehabilitation. Then there is big impact and there is no incentive for us to be reusing and recycling. With both an increase in the tonnage fee and then at the other end a higher rate for them to dump into landfill sites, it creates this push-pull effect which can be very positive for us to be recycling much more and using fewer non-renewable resources.

Ms. Churley: Thank you very much.

The Chair: For the government side, Ms. Van Bommel.

Mrs. Van Bommel: Thank you for your presentation. We've also had presentations from the aggregate industry. One of the things that they told us about aggregates in this province is that the GTA is one of the major customers, and if they can't bring it from within the greenbelt, then they'll have to truck it in from other jurisdictions, which certainly puts a lot of traffic on the roads and puts a certain burden on the infrastructure. How do we respond to that?

Mr. Bob Gardiner: The issue of transportation of aggregates, I think, is one that goes back way too long in terms of constantly supporting a truck-driven system of transportation when oftentimes, again, elsewhere in the world—we were referring to it just a bit ago—you have water and you have rail as the significant means of transportation. If we have to start to look elsewhere for aggregate, beyond the so-called GTA, and there's a great deal there, then at the same time we have to develop sensible strategies for transporting that aggregate. I look at Manitoulin Island right now, where Lafarge is comfortably moving that material throughout the lakes to as far away as Sept-Îles, Quebec.

If we want to maintain a business-as-usual strategy, we have a problem, because it's not sustainable. We have to look elsewhere.

Mrs. Van Bommel: In your presentation, you also state that “aggregate operations can have devastating impacts on the quality and quantity of water resources.” One of the things that a lot of people who get their water from a pipeline don't quite understand is that whole concept of what happens to the groundwater. Can you explain that particular statement?

Ms. Symmes: It's quite a complicated issue. I'll try to keep it as simple as possible.

Mrs. Van Bommel: And short too.

Ms. Symmes: Yes, short as well. First of all, depending on the system that's used, there is a huge

drawdown effect. It's like when you dig into a beach. The drawdown water sinks down below the water table and becomes inaccessible to many things—people, wildlife etc. Also, there's lots of contamination that can happen within the industrial site that gets into the groundwater, it contaminates it. Once the groundwater system is contaminated in an area, it can take hundreds of years for it to be cleaned up.

1230

The Chair: Thank you. For the official opposition, Ms. Munro.

Mrs. Julia Munro (York North): Thank you for coming today. I want to ask you a question with regard to the success that you had with your OPA 161 that you reference in your presentation. Certainly, without any more detail than that which you provide, it sounds like the ultimate, the goal, in terms of having the various stakeholders and being able to come up with decisions based on that.

In your last sentence you say that “it is extremely important that this work not be diluted or undone by any interpretation of Bill 135.” My question, then, has to do with that caution, because we've certainly heard a number of presentations in the last couple of days where there has been concern raised over the value and importance of local planning. Examples have been brought to the committee which would demonstrate a complete contradiction between examples of local planning and Bill 135.

My question to you is, are you concerned that this is a one-size-fits-all approach as opposed to providing local communities with the kind of opportunity that others and you were fortunate enough to spearhead in Caledon?

Mr. Gardiner: I think what has to be addressed is that with each of the municipalities there are significant disparities. Caledon probably is unique to the extent that we have virtually every single variable imaginable within a greenbelt environment—a significant agricultural base, an aggregate base etc.—so that the town, the region and the province really have to work hard to bring these issues to the table and to make sense of them. I think that's what has been done in this case. So, because of the issue of disparities, you really have to engage the municipalities as best you possibly can, because they are the front-line defence, if you will; they are the ones facing the issues on a regular basis, and they're the ones who can best deliver from the ground up, if you will, as far as policy is concerned.

The Chair: Thank you for your delegation today. We appreciate your being here.

Ms. Symmes: Thank you. And we have coyotes in Caledon as well.

The Chair: I know you do.

RESCUE LAKE SIMCOE COALITION

The Chair: Our next delegation is Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition. Welcome, sir. Good afternoon.

Mr. Robert Eisenberg: Good afternoon.

The Chair: If you could identify yourself for Hansard and the group that you speak for. When you begin, you'll have 15 minutes. Should you leave any time at the end, we'll be able to ask questions. I'll give you a one-minute warning as you get close to the end.

Mr. Eisenberg: Honourable MPPs, Madam Chair, I am chair of the Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition and a director of Ontario Nature, the FON.

The Chair: Would you identify yourself, please.

Mr. Eisenberg: Bob Eisenberg. Sorry.

The Chair: Thank you very much. OK.

Mr. Eisenberg: Ontario Nature partners with conservation groups all over the province and has about 25,000 members. The Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition is an umbrella group of 13 ratepayer groups in the Lake Simcoe watershed. I can say without fear of contradiction that we all applaud the recent greenbelt legislation.

If, however, this government's goal is to protect southern Ontario's finest environmental and agricultural features, including Lake Simcoe itself, it must expand the greenbelt—

Interjections.

Mr. Eisenberg: I'm sorry. Should I just play through when people are talking and everything like that?

The Chair: If I find them distracting, I'll shut them down, but I'm listening.

Mr. Eisenberg: Thanks. If, however, this government's goal is to protect southern Ontario's finest environmental and agricultural features, including Lake Simcoe itself, it must expand the proposed greenbelt to include south Simcoe and the Lake Simcoe watershed.

Bill 135 is vital to the survival of Lake Simcoe. It's hard to grasp that this huge lake that has given us so much pleasure and is the underpinning of the recreation industry, responsible for 40% of the local economy, is deteriorating. Weeds clog beaches and marinas, beach closings are increasing, the cold water fishery is no longer self-sustaining, and water quality is threatened.

Lake Simcoe is the largest inland lake solely within Ontario. It's a natural resource as valuable to Ontario as the Oak Ridges moraine or the Niagara Escarpment. The Lake Simcoe Environmental Strategy Group—LSEMS—a study group under the auspices of the conservation authority, has identified excess phosphorus input as the major cause of the lake's deterioration. Just as carbon dioxide is a surrogate for all the other contributors to sick-building syndrome, phosphorus is a surrogate for most of the other pollutants that threaten the lake.

LSEMS, Ontario Nature and Environmental Defence have all identified uncontrolled, poorly planned growth as the chief culprit in the increase in phosphorus input in Lake Simcoe in recent years. Numbers presented by LSEMS indicate that, notwithstanding the reduction in phosphorus loading from farmers and all the efforts by the authority and ordinary citizens, phosphorus input into the lake has not decreased. The problem is that non-point loading, which is runoff from newly urbanized land, has doubled in the last 10 years. Population growth outside settlement areas has simply overwhelmed all other efforts

to stop the lake's deterioration. We have all awakened to the alarming facts that not all growth is desirable or sustainable. Maximum growth anywhere is no longer optimum growth.

That's why we need your help—Conservatives and Liberals. Individuals can only do so much. We're willing to build our docks according to regulations designed to protect fish habitats, to refrain from adding sand or even rocks to our shorelines, and from building lakefront embankments to enhance our properties. And throughout the watershed, our Wave project—Healthy Yards, Healthy Waters—has caught fire: People are avoiding phosphorus-based fertilizers and planting perennials instead of grass.

Forgive me for saying it, but it's hard to ask people to respect the regulations and remediate their properties when at the same time new developments are gouging out canals, building new marinas and making wholesale changes to shorelines. This used to make sense, but for those of us who have followed carefully the progress of Lake Simcoe, it just doesn't make sense any more. We used to think of the lake as a vast, invulnerable resource; it doesn't seem that way to us any more.

That's why we must support the greenbelt legislation. That's why schoolchildren are writing letters asking us to save the lake. That's why the Wave is so popular. We are experiencing a groundswell of support, but we need your help. We will not succeed in saving the lake without the protected countryside designation of the greenbelt legislation.

The value to Lake Simcoe of the greenbelt legislation is jeopardized by the failure to include Simcoe county. Excluding Simcoe county encourages developers to leapfrog York and Durham. Development pressures from Toronto on the Lake Simcoe shoreline are monumental. Projects on the drawing board outside recognized growth areas in Simcoe county threaten the lake and the Lake Simcoe way of life.

There are several ways in which you can help: Expand the greenbelt to include Simcoe county. The provincial watershed study includes an investigation into the carrying capacity of Lake Simcoe to withstand further development outside of settlement areas, so until the lake's carrying capacity study is completed, at the very least restrict growth to existing settlement areas. Again, at the very least implement the proposed change to Bill 26 that requires that OMB and other land use decisions be consistent with Ontario's provincial policy statement.

What I really want to tell you is that growth doesn't mean sprawl. Before becoming involved with Ontario Nature and the Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition, I worked on the city of Toronto's main streets housing initiative and was privileged to be on the mayor's task force that produced the King-Spadina and King-Parliament initiatives. From my involvement with the two conservation groups, I learned about the deleterious effects of poorly planned growth, but from the committees, I learned that a huge portion of Ontario's planned population growth can be accommodated in the city and that

very palatable zoning changes can have huge beneficial impacts on the lives of Torontonians and Ontarians. Seemingly minor changes to land uses in these formerly dilapidated areas unleashed an incredible building and revitalization effort that goes on to this day.

So here is the thing: Southern Ontario is losing between 40 and 60 acres of prime farmland, woodlands and wetlands a day due to poorly planned growth. It's obvious to everybody except some in the development industry and some who hope to sell to the development industry that this just can't go on.

1240

Other jurisdictions have understood this. In California, we've just heard, a state with a population the size of Canada's, one can drive for miles in Marin and Sonoma counties without seeing a subdivision. Building takes place within town limits. Outside Nice, France, you would be laughed at if you wanted to rezone a farm. A farm is a farm. New York City is committed to spending US\$1 billion to protect its water and undeveloped lands.

The argument we need the subdivisions to offer affordable housing just doesn't wash. In the first place, and this is the most important thing, subdivision housing is not affordable housing; it's subsidized housing. Ask the people in Milton, who were told that the new developments would pay for themselves and who are now faced with increased tax bills for the next 10 years. The cost of roads, schools and services always exceeds the development charges and new taxes. Ask the people in town whose main streets are threatened by the malls that service the subdivisions.

The cost of new subdivisions in lost farms, lost wetlands, lost woodlots, lost species, lost environmental filtering of pollutants and loss of a way of life that most of us treasure is incalculable, and it's unnecessary. We have enough land in brownfields, along main streets, along hydro rights-of-way to accommodate growth for the next 30 years with existing densities. If densities are marginally increased, the supply will last much longer.

My old company built infill, neighbourhood-related, medium-density housing in Toronto that provided a wide range of housing, from subsidized to affordable to luxury. With the benefit of a workable main streets housing program, Toronto and other communities could provide exciting, affordable, civic life-affirming housing that would subsidize municipal services rather than require taxpayer subsidy to support.

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the greenbelt strategy, we urge you to implement a greenbelt advisory committee with real teeth, funding and intelligence to oversee this great initiative.

In conclusion, I have to say that we may be the first generation that will be remembered less for what we have built than for what we have preserved. We will be remembered less for the quantity of new houses and shopping plazas that we built on the outskirts of our towns and villages than for the quality of life we have brought to our main streets and neighbourhoods. And you will be remembered by those of us who live in the Lake

Simcoe watershed for what you did to save the lake and the Lake Simcoe way of life.

There is evidence that Lake Simcoe is reaching a tipping point. Increased water clarity due to zebra mussels, fish restocking and Band-Aid solutions such as weed removal have combined to disguise the gravity of the situation. Property taxes are being appealed, and tourists are afraid to swim in the water. That's why Mayor Grossi of Georgina convened a meeting of mayors from the watershed and provincial representatives to discuss the problem and to seek solutions. That's why the membership of the many organizations under the Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition supports the greenbelt legislation and asks for your help with Simcoe county.

The government is showing enlightened, pragmatic leadership. The greenbelt legislation reflects Ontario Nature's greenway strategy and Environmental Defence's NOAH plan, and years of research and input from the province's most knowledgeable and sophisticated land use and habitat experts.

Implementation of the greenbelt, combined with programs that create farm trusts or allow farmers to swap tax benefits and development rights, main street housing programs, and attention to Simcoe county are all practical, achievable measures that would ensure the legacy of this government would be to conserve for our children and grandchildren an environmental and civic landscape unsurpassed anywhere.

Sometimes it takes outsiders to tell us what we already know. When friends visit from other parts of the world, you won't be surprised to hear that I don't take them to Richmond Hill or even Newmarket, nice communities though they may be; I take them to Lake Simcoe, and they're blown away. The birds, the fishing, wildlife, swimming, boating, things we take for granted, they can't get over. I'm getting emotional about this. It's so weird. When I wrote it, I wasn't emotional.

I hope my grandchildren and yours can play by the shore on unspoiled beaches, catch crayfish in the rocks, swim in unpolluted water. You can make this happen. That's something to be remembered for.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Eisenberg. You've left one minute for each party to speak, beginning with Ms. Matthews.

Ms. Matthews: Thank you very much for that presentation. I think it speaks very eloquently of what we are trying to do. I must say it's good to hear from people who are committed not to their self-interest but to the interest of future generations, and I thank you for that. We're now in the fourth day of these hearings, and we hear from people who want us to slow down or stop, or we hear from people who want us to expand. So we hear from people who are in and don't want to be in, or from people who are out and want to be in. I guess that's our job as politicians, to decide which side of that line to fall on. I'm very happy to say that I certainly fall on your side of that line. Thank you very much.

The Chair: From the official opposition, Mrs. Munro.

Mrs. Munro: As someone who has always recognized the importance of Lake Simcoe and worked with

community groups in this particular area, I'm pleased that you were able to be included in the presenters today.

One question, though, that I have for you: In the presentation, you refer to the need for the inclusion of Simcoe county. My question to you is whether or not you would consider the importance of watershed planning. The reason I say that is simply because of the fact that the shoreline of Lake Simcoe includes more than south Simcoe county.

I'm concerned, as I raised the issue with the previous presenters, about the need to have localized input into the planning process. It would seem to me—and you made reference to the study that the conservation authority is doing—that watershed planning is perhaps even more important than the inclusion of all of south Simcoe county.

Mr. Eisenberg: Thank you for that question. It's tough to prioritize, but if I had to—it certainly seems obvious to all that the greenbelt has received over 15 years of study. The fact that it doesn't include Simcoe county merely means that there's more work to be done. I certainly would not want to throw out the baby with the bathwater.

More specifically to your question, watershed study is very important, and that's why we've asked for a moratorium on development in Simcoe county in particular until the greenbelt can be expanded and further studied. What the government said is that they've studied south of Simcoe county; they just haven't been able to include Simcoe county yet, but they will. Fortunately, we have Bill 26. If they have that "be consistent with" clause included—

Mrs. Munro: It is there.

Mr. Eisenberg: Apparently it's not yet enforceable, and if we had the moratorium on development until the government can include Simcoe county and this watershed study could be completed, we'd be very happy. But I don't know if that answers your question.

The Chair: It's enough of a question in the time that we have available. Ms. Churley.

Ms. Churley: Thank you, Mr. Eisenberg. Just for the record, you mentioned that you needed some help from the Liberals and Tories. I just wanted to let you know—

Mr. Eisenberg: And the NDP, of course.

Ms. Churley:—you've got it from New Democrats, because we will be putting forward an amendment that says—

Mr. Eisenberg: I just never heard the NDP say that the plan was poorly considered.

Ms. Churley: I understand what you're saying. South Simcoe will be one of our amendments. It's just a no-brainer. It should be included because of the stresses there already. Talk about scientific evidence that already exists for that area; there's no excuse to leave it out.

I guess my question, though, would be more generic. You're a developer, right?

Mr. Eisenberg: Yes.

Ms. Churley: You're one of the few developers that come forward in such support of the greenbelt. We had

some before you, talking about how house prices are going to go up for new immigrants and how all kinds of horrible things are going to happen if the greenbelt goes through. Why are you, as a developer, in such support of curbing urban sprawl?

Mr. Eisenberg: I didn't pay her to ask that question, I promise.

Ms. Churley: No, we've never met before.

Mr. Eisenberg: That's what I do for a living. We restore architecturally interesting old buildings in my company, York Heritage Properties, and we build tons of housing on main streets and in infill sites. Toronto has enough land for the next 30 years.

The big point I made, I think, is that if subdivisions were truly to pay their way, they wouldn't be affordable. That's the thing that we must always consider. The fact is that developers will come to us and say, "We're not going to add any more phosphorus to the lake. In fact, we're taking it out." But they don't talk about the phosphorus that's going to come into the lake when they tear down trees, when they tear down shrubbery and all the natural buffers. Even the conservation authority can't respond to that because nobody knows. All we know is that non-point loading has doubled in the last 10 years. So what's the cost of that? What's the cost if Lake Simcoe dies?

1250

Ms. Churley: So you're talking about the externalities of the subdivisions and everything that never gets counted into the—

Mr. Eisenberg: Sure, but that's my particular prejudice. If you want to talk just actual facts on the ground, read the Golden report, read Environmental Defence's report. They'll tell you that for every dollar in tax revenue they raise, it costs them \$1.20 to service. Why is that extra 20 cents not included in the development costs of those subdivisions? You know why? Because it would no longer be affordable housing.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Eisenberg. Thank you for your passion. We appreciate it.

CROWN BENCH ESTATES WINERY

The Chair: Our next delegation is Crown Bench Estates Winery. Welcome. Please identify yourself and the group you're speaking for. When you begin, you're going to have 15 minutes. I will try to give you an idea that you're getting close to the end once you do. If you leave time, we'll be able to ask questions.

Ms. Livia Sipos: My name is Livia Sipos. I am the president and partner, with my husband, Peter Kocsis, in Crown Bench Estates Winery. I am also the Grape King for 2004 in Ontario. I also happen to be a lifelong Liberal. Above all that, I am most proud to be a farmer.

The greenbelt legislation impacts on all of the above. In case you don't know, the Grape King is a yearly selection, chosen by a committee from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and it is the best example of the best-kept, most innovative vineyard, exhibiting sound

agricultural practices, ecological management and stewardship.

As awkward as I may look wearing this chain—and believe me, it's heavy, about 15 pounds—this chain of office has on it 49 names; mine is not on it yet. I am the 50th Grape King. This represents 50 years of farmers looking after their land, keeping our space green, not for any kind of big prize, because mostly we get nothing, not even a really good prize. But we've done all this for 50 years and we have kept this space green without impending legislation. We didn't need that on top of us.

As is the case with most policy initiatives from government, the people affected are compelled to merely modify the impending legislation, knowing full well that they cannot stop it. I feel that the greenbelt legislation will have catastrophic and far-ranging effects on most of the stakeholders, and I am speaking here of the small wineries and the grape growers.

As I said, the honour of Grape King accrues to the best-kept vineyard. I was able to garner this honour because, as a winery, I am capable of producing a value-added product that paid for the extra care that the vineyard required. Fruit farms, including grapes, do not cash-flow. The government and its various departments know this and have known this for a long time.

A long time ago, agriculture gave birth to civilization and a contract was entered into between producers and society. The contract promised a fair return on one side and the farmers promised not to hold society hostage to starvation. It wasn't that long ago that another commodity sector, the oil sector, bandied about the phrase "Let them freeze in the dark" as their economic leverage. Farmers have had a much more potent economic weapon, but we have never, ever used it or threatened to use it. While you and I may be able to survive a week without fuel, the price of a hamburger would escalate by the hour if there were nothing else to eat.

We have kept our promise, and in return, perversely, government and society imposed a cheap food policy on the farmer. When the first Grape King was crowned, half the population of this province were farmers. We have become so efficient that now only 2% of our population are farming, and most of those are barely able to eke out an existence, except for the marketing board sector.

To a large degree, the damage has already been done. What amounts to an equity lockdown has already impinged on the economic well-being of the Niagara Peninsula, because modern farming is very capital-intensive, requiring an ongoing cash outlay that at the best of times is hard to get and is now even more difficult.

The greenbelt legislation at its inception gave scant attention to farming, and rightly so. By definition, a greenbelt is not a farm. Monoculture and intensive agriculture are anathema to the environmentalists. They are merely paying lip service to the preservation of farmland because it's politically correct. The government in this case is not far behind. The agricultural policy and its contents were an afterthought, so much so that the very policy gives lie to the rest of the impending legislation.

Far from contemplating any compensation, monetary or otherwise, the legislation, in a perverse turn, grants farmers the right to a return on value-added product equal to 100% of the gross that farm produces. On my farm, that would mean that if I were to ask for a winery licence under the new legislation, if I produce 100 tonnes of grapes, I would only be able to vinify 10 tonnes of that to meet the new farm policy the Liberals have brought down.

The genesis of this legislation is the convergence of two sets of events: first, a newly elected government which has found itself with no budget and is therefore in desperate need of a feel-good, look-good policy. The second impetus came from certain stakeholders in the wine industry that capitalized on this by wrapping themselves in a green flag. The government is being duped. The wholesale decline or theft of equity plays into the hands of multinational conglomerates and will make farmers serfs on their own land.

The designation of the Niagara Peninsula as a greenbelt in this case is tantamount to expropriation and the wholesale interference in and degradation of the economic well-being of a whole sector of the farming economy for the benefit of a few large players. This scenario is not unique to Ontario; in fact, the very examples used to justify this legislation include places where farmers have actually become serfs on their own land, serving large wineries while barely making a living. The process is all too familiar and exemplified in California, and this legislation begins the process in Ontario.

This involves first eliminating the power of farmers to sell their land for the fair market value it might bring. The next step involves the purchase of these farms by absentee landowners who have no interest in farming and use it as a tax write-off and who subsequently contract the properties to large wineries. Examples of this absentee ownership can be found in townships surrounding Toronto, where million-dollar mansions sit in the middle of prime number 1 agricultural land. This is precisely why the greenbelt has its sights on the Niagara Peninsula.

The process of alienation has already begun. Wineries are already demanding that in order to purchase grapes, they must have a contract that places a restrictive covenant on the land, as repugnant as this is to common law. The usual form is a 10-year contract that is renewed every five years for another 10. Not satisfied with the lowest price for grapes in any jurisdiction in North America, the large wineries want to bring down grape prices further. The two largest wineries already manufacture over 90% of the wines sold in Ontario, but 70% of this wine, which they sell under labels such as "Cellared in Canada" or "Bottled in Canada," is imported under tariff barriers that include subsidized wines from exploited offshore labour. The aim of these stakeholders is to bring domestic prices in line with surplus and highly subsidized grapes from offshore. The government is being duped. It is rushing into a complex economy with little knowledge of the intended, never mind the unintended, consequences of its action.

The implications of the greenbelt legislation, except as noted above, have been theoretical. Its effect is, however, foreshadowed by the Niagara Escarpment Commission legislation. Not wanting to belabour the boondoggle and ineptitude demonstrated by the NEC, suffice it to say that its abolition has at times passed second reading in the Legislature.

Two acres of my farm is designated as Bruce Trail. This designation is tantamount to expropriation. But beyond this, the regulations impose a hardship not only on my economic well-being but also on the control and care of my vineyard. I wanted to install a culvert in my creek to stop ongoing erosion emanating from the escarpment. It was demanded that I undertake an engineering study and an environmental assessment, which was estimated to cost over \$30,000 before my application could be considered. All this to install a \$150 culvert to stop my grapes from flooding. How many such ongoing examples will the greenbelt create? And how many litigious cases will be in front of the court for generations to come?

1300

The complexity of the impending legislation is also clearly foreshadowed by the existence of the LCBO, which, among other things, restricts my constitutional right to market access and the right to make a living. While societal control of alcohol is laudable, the imposition of a monopoly has created an aberrant economy. The LCBO restricts domestic access on the one hand, and has granted 300 off-site stores to two of the largest wineries, through which they sell mainly offshore wines, as does the LCBO. There are nine countries that sell more wine at the LCBO than Ontario. England, a country that has no vineyards at all, sells half as much wine as Ontario. The Legislature, in its wisdom, has legislation on the books called the Wine Content Act that states that to have a winery licence in Ontario, you must manufacture wines exclusively from Ontario grapes. Ostensibly to prop up the domestic manufacturing of domestic products, the Legislature enacted a “notwithstanding” clause to this act which has allowed large wineries, along with the LCBO, to dominate the market with offshore wines. This has effectively marginalized 97 out of the over 100 small domestic wineries.

After all the objections that have been raised in front of this committee, if it is still the intention of the government to pass this bill, they must become cognizant of the complexity of the overall economy and the rural societies that they are affecting. To be more precise, to balance the scale, the following have to be included:

—Stagnated communities must have additional funds allocated to them to overcome an eroded tax base.

—Infrastructure for badly needed rural communities must be provincially funded. Most of us farmers in the Niagara Peninsula don’t even have city water, never mind sewer. We were luck to get gas five years ago. There’s no public transport. We have nothing there, and we will continue to have even less after this passes.

—Eliminate the “notwithstanding” clause from the Wine Content Act.

—Allow domestic wineries to have additional retail outlets.

—Mandate the LCBO to general list at least one wine from each winery.

—Increase the taxes on blended Canadian wines.

—Decrease the mark-up on Ontario wines and cap LCBO mark-up for domestic wines at \$15.

While it is laudable for the government to try to preserve green spaces for future generations, it must not do this at the expense borne solely by an economically vulnerable sector of society, in this case farmers. The cliché is, if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it. The greenbelt legislation posits a tabula rasa that for all the world sounds like Dodge City, with development growing unchecked. In fact, there are municipal, regional, provincial and environmental laws that curtail expansion. The only reason this legislation is being pushed through at break-neck speed is for the Liberal government to give something to the urban voters. They are mentored in this by the large wineries and their supporters to get the farmers off the land, the very opposite of this legislation’s intentions.

The Chair: Thank you. You’ve left us a minute each for each party, beginning with the official opposition.

Mr. Hudak: Livia, great job. Congratulations again on your office as the Grape King for Niagara. As you described very well, it’s a reflection of the environmentally friendly approach you use on your vineyard.

You make an excellent point—I don’t have much time—with respect to the recommendations of the advisory committee, the Vanclief-Bedgood, which would limit the size of a building and the value of production for value-added. You say if you had 100 tonnes of grapes, you could actually only press 10.

Ms. Sipos: Under this new bill, we could only vinify 10 tonnes of grapes and only build 1,600 square feet.

Mr. Hudak: It’s a bit ridiculous, isn’t it?

Ms. Sipos: It doesn’t even—it was a waste of paper. I’m sorry it wasted a tree.

Interjection.

The Chair: I don’t want any debate about this. You can answer your question without interference.

Ms. Sipos: I’m sorry.

The Chair: No, no, it’s not you. You finish answering the question.

Ms. Sipos: It’s an untenable situation. There is no logic in that.

Mr. Hudak: I think what the committee members fail to realize when they talk about how it’s going to help the wineries is that most of the wineries that exist in Niagara could not have opened under what the government is proposing. Henry of Pelham could not have opened—

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Hudak. Ms. Churley?

Ms. Churley: Thank you. I have to comment on the title of your presentation. It’s very creative: Field of Screams.

Ms. Sipos: Yes, that is the consensus in farmland down there.

Ms. Churley: You mentioned the LCBO. The government just recently announced a review. I notice that in no part of the terms of reference was a review of how they sell domestic wine. I presume you would like to take that review as an opportunity for the government to make the LCBO look at ways of changing their policy for there to be more domestic wine sold.

Ms. Sipos: Definitely.

Ms. Churley: That was easy.

Ms. Sipos: Yes, that was easy. I think most Ontarians want to support an Ontario wine industry, but when they go to the LCBO and see a bottle and it says on it, "Cellared in Canada," or "Bottled in Canada," that has 70% off-shore wine. People don't know that. Only VQA wines are 100% Ontario wines. And only 4.5% of LCBO sales of wine is VQA wine.

The Chair: Thank you. For the governing side, Mrs. Van Bommel.

Mrs. Van Bommel: Congratulations on your honour.

I apologize for interrupting; that wasn't very good. I'd like to go back to that very comment, though, because nowhere in this bill does it say anything about value-added farming enterprises or anything like this. I don't understand where you get the idea that by enacting this bill, which is enabling legislation, somehow we are going to restrict what you can do in terms of value-added on your vineyards.

Ms. Sipos: Have you read the agricultural report that has come down to help us out?

Mrs. Van Bommel: I've read it and I've seen it. I certainly share concerns about what's in that particular report, but those are recommendations. They are not part of this bill.

Ms. Sipos: Well, they are recommendations happening at the same time—this greenbelt legislation is hitting us, the agricultural recommendations and the review of the LCBO. All three impact on my sector of the industry.

Mrs. Van Bommel: We heard yesterday from the Christian Farmers Federation, and they too said that a lot less of the consumer dollar is working its way down to the farmer. We are receiving less and less of that. There was a discussion about the fact that the farm community would probably have to start looking very closely at expanding our operations into value-added. You're saying that you certainly need the value-added component of your farm operation. You need to take it past simply producing the grapes and into putting it into a value-added product.

Ms. Sipos: Exactly, but the new legislation for value-added—it says the government is promoting value-added, but the value-added income cannot be over 100% of your gross sales. You are restricted—

Mrs. Van Bommel: But we're not saying that

The Chair: I don't want any argument. Please let the delegation answer.

Ms. Sipos: It says right there.

The Chair: Thank you very much for your delegation. We appreciate your being here. Congratulations on your honour.

ONTARIO ALLIED GOLF ASSOCIATIONS

The Chair: Our last delegation this morning in the public portion of our hearings is the Royal Canadian Golf Association.

Ms. Teri Yamada: Good afternoon. My name is Teri Yamada and I'm with the Royal Canadian Golf Association. My background is in environmental horticulture and agronomy. I'm here this afternoon representing the Ontario Allied Golf Associations. Included in that group is the Golf Association of Ontario, both the Ontario and the Canadian golf superintendents' associations, the National Golf Course Owners Association, and the Ontario Professional Golfers' Association.

I would like to start off by saying that the golf industry truly recognizes and appreciates the need to preserve and protect green space in the Golden Horseshoe. That being said, golf courses have proven themselves to be rather effective buffer or transition zones between rural and urban environments.

But I'm a realist, and I also know that some people just don't like golf. Personally, I think it's perhaps that they just haven't forgiven us for some of the fashions we had in the 1970s. So today I publicly apologize, because there really isn't any excuse for loud, plaid polyester pants. But I think it has been forgiven and forgotten, and in fact I have statistics to show that.

Our statistics show that the participation rate in golf in Canada is second to no other country. In fact, one in five Canadians golf. So as you have population growth in the Golden Horseshoe, there is going to be continued demand for golf in that area, and we have to deal with that.

1310

Like I said, golf courses can in fact be an effective buffer zone between rural and urban landscapes, and that's because turf grass has the unique ability both to absorb heat as well as effectively filter water and take some of the contaminants out. So it is indeed ideal for an urban environment. I have actually learned, in discussions with some people at the city of Toronto, that golf courses within Toronto proper play a very significant and essential role in storm water management, and that's because of the ability of turf grass to slow down and absorb the water.

I've been in this business for over 20 years—I know it's hard to believe, but it's true—and I've seen a lot of changes in both the design and maintenance of golf courses. Significantly, as an industry we've spent quite a bit of money researching and finding better ways to maintain golf courses, as well as finding new strains of turf grass that are going to withstand a lot of the stresses so we can reduce our inputs. The reason for this is very simple: water, fertilizer, pesticides are all expense items to us. It makes absolutely no sense for us to overuse them. We're always looking for ways to reduce inputs. But in addition to that, what we have noted—and I think this is quite significant—is a change in the architecture of golf courses, the design. It's a change in taste, but it's

also a change in the way we think about how we manage our properties.

One of the significant changes I've seen is that we've gone from the parkland style of golf course, which is wall-to-wall mowed grass that has to be maintained all as turf, to more target-type golf courses, where we're maintaining the greens, the tees, the fairways and a portion of the rough, and a lot of the remaining land is actually naturalized. We endorse that and we try to promote it.

One of the most significant things about this style of landscaping is that what you're trying to do is encourage the designer—the architect—and the owner, obviously, because they're going to have the final say, to design it so that the topographical features and the water features use the surface drainage as well as the subgrade drainage to recycle the water, so if you take all the water and the drainage and have it run off into your irrigation pond, you can reuse that water on site. There are two benefits to that. Not only are you saving and preserving and reusing and recycling that water, you are actually able to absorb some of the dissolved nutrients in the runoff and reuse that effectively as fertilization, so we get to reuse our fertilizer as well. It makes economic as well as ecological sense to encourage designers to recycle water in their design of the golf course.

That brings us to a concern we have with something in the current greenbelt plan. Under 3.2.2. it reads, "With the exception of mineral aggregate operations, the disturbed area of any site generally does not exceed 25%..." I can guarantee you, if you have a golf course architect go out and walk a piece of land and he's charged with designing an interesting golf hole, but in addition we want him to make sure the topography and the subgrade drainage recycles the water, he's going to have to move more than 25% of that soil. So given the choice of good ecological design of a golf course versus maximizing and limiting the amount of soil moved, we're going to fall on the side of good planning and good design. So that's a bit problematic for us. It's also kind of interesting that in the way this is written, it would appear that it's all right to totally degrade a piece of land by mining it for sand and gravel, but if you're building a golf course on the same piece of land, you can only displace 25% of it. That's food for thought.

Another number that pops up within the proposed plan that has us wanting to understand it better is 4.1.1, where it reads, "Where contemplated within the natural heritage system, applicants must demonstrate that at least 30% of the total developable area of the site will remain or be returned to a self-sustaining vegetative state..." "Self-sustaining vegetative state": We would tend to interpret that these are naturalized areas, and we have encouraged golf courses to introduce or bring back some native species of herbaceous plants, trees and shrubs, as well as turf grasses, so we can lower our costs, quite frankly, to maintain them. If they don't require water, don't require fertilizer and you don't mow them, that's great.

In fact, back in 1993 we introduced something called the Environmental Guidelines for Canadian Golf

Courses. You can find that on our Web site. From there, we decided we needed to find tools to help our member clubs adhere to those guidelines, and one of the things we introduced in 1996 was something called the Audubon Co-operative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses. The reason we like this program—it's now managed by Audubon International out of Selkirk, New York—is that it's a voluntary but educational program. It teaches superintendents and golf course owners and operators how to maintain the non-golf parts of their property as wildlife habitat and encourage that, so they're introducing specific food sources and habitat species. In addition to that, they concentrate on the golf portions of the property and encourage them to learn how best to maintain those.

So it's not only educational, but what I like about the program is that it recognizes that each golf property is unique, that you can't really have a cookie-cutter "maximum this, minimum that." You have to take into consideration the site. We do continue to encourage our golf course members to participate in programs such as that. We find that, if you just put minimum and maximum percentages etc., unless it is science-based—if we know that wildlife biologists can show us that 30% is the magic number so that you're going to draw the indigenous species back to a site, great. But I haven't been able to find that in any scientific literature.

Our preference is to have language that would encourage our golf course owners, operators and superintendents to participate in programs that are going to maximize the portions of their property for wildlife habitat, maximize area and usage of native species and minimize inputs. That's why we continue to spend money on research in those areas.

One last point would be in reference to 4.1.2, which talks about potential uses on the designated agricultural lands. What we have found in the past is that because golf courses are covered in turf, turf will degrade and will actually enrich the soil by becoming part of the organic content of that soil. What better way to land-bank marginal agricultural lands if you want to reintroduce it as part of your agricultural inventory in the future? So what we ask is that golf courses be considered for some types of agricultural lands within the designated areas. We're not saying to take prime agricultural land out of agriculture for golf—heavens, no—but there are marginal pieces where, if you want to create that buffer between the urban sprawl and the rural communities, golf is actually not a bad option.

If your concern is, if you do land-bank for future agricultural use, how is that golf course being treated? Are pesticides being used? Should we be concerned about that?—well, we have something in the industry called integrated pest management. Beyond that, we decided we needed to give IPM teeth, so the industry has come up with what's now known as IPM accreditation. This is a system that is third-party operated. Through a system of examination, you will now know that you have here an IPM officer who is well trained and understands all the tenets of IPM. Beyond that, there is an annual

written audit, and every three years they can expect to have an on-site audit. These audits will be performed by recognized Canadian environmental auditors. The whole system is arm's-length: It's run by Ridgetown College, and it's the program proper that pays for the auditors so that they are not employed by the golf course. That is one way of ensuring that, if a golf course is in an area that may one day be reintroduced into the agricultural inventory of land, as long as it's IPM-accredited, you can have some comfort that it's being maintained very properly.

I'd like to finish by saying that we look forward as an industry to continue to work with the government as it moves forward in finalizing the greenbelt plan, as well as a source water protection act. We have great interest in that, in protecting our waters. We do feel very comfortable that golf is an effective option to maintain green space, especially as urban areas continue to spread and push further into rural areas. Thank you.

The Chair: You've left a minute and 30 seconds for each party, beginning with Ms. Churley.

Ms. Churley: Thank you very much for your presentation. I'm not a golfer—I admit I'm one of those—but my partner is. Even now, he looks funny when he goes out to golf, I have to say. I will not show him the Hansard from this committee hearing. I'm in trouble now.

Just in terms of the greenbelt in general, you mentioned something that I have a big concern about: aggregate extraction. It does seem a little funny to me that they have almost carte blanche to operate within the greenbelt and you don't. I guess my question is, why would a golf course, especially within prime agricultural farmland and other environmentally sensitive land, where, as you mentioned, there are all the issues like the huge pesticides issues and other problems, which I know some are trying to deal with—why would golf courses, and why should they, be allowed on this very environmentally sensitive land?

Ms. Yamada: As I was referring to, the whole design idea. In a well-designed golf course maintained with the latest science, so we know we're recycling the water and we have implemented integrated pest management, so everything has been done in terms of sunlight penetration, water drainage, usage of water and fertility and has made the stress on the plants as minimal as possible, then pesticides, which seems to be the main concern, will be minimized. If you create a situation for a plant to grow where it doesn't get diseased or stressed, you won't need to use the pesticides. If you use water judiciously, then you're not wasting water. A well-designed golf course, maintained properly, is, if not environmentally benign, if you take a piece of already degraded land, you can actually improve it.

The Chair: The next question will be from Mr. Rinaldi.

Mr. Rinaldi: Thank you very much, Ms. Yamada. It's great to have you here today to share your concerns with this committee. Let me tell you, first of all, that if you

can design a golf course where the ball will go straight, I will support all your recommendations.

Having said that, though, you made some suggestions over constraints that have been put on the industry. The first one, point 3.2.2: I see here that you have some concerns with the percentage of soil movement. Do you have any recommendations as to what number could be there instead of 25%?

Ms. Yamada: I think our issue is with placing a number. I do know of some golf courses where, just because the terrain was so spectacular and worked well with the drainage patterns, very little earth was moved. They just sort of clipped out trees as necessary to build the golf course. On others, if it's a completely flat piece of land, they're going to have to move the earth. So what we would prefer is to have, through the Ministry of the Environment, the certificate of approval process. That is still the best way to deal with it because it's site by site. It's site-specific.

The Chair: Thank you. Mrs. Munro?

Mrs. Munro: Actually, that is where I was going to go with my questions, so I'm back to that. I read what you said, that the land must be disturbed. When I first read that, I was thinking about the land in relation to a flat plain as opposed to the amount; that is, actually moving the earth. So when we're talking about the 25%, we're talking about actually physically moving earth from point A to B within the site?

Ms. Yamada: Not necessarily, no. That, if you read it, is very open to interpretation: Are we talking volume? Are we talking square footage? That's unclear to us. But it remains problematic, because if you talk about just disturbance—say we're just talking about square footage now, surface area—you're going to have to disturb the whole thing just to seed it.

Mrs. Munro: And that's why I asked the question. I didn't understand what was here, so I hoped you would. As you say, all of it would be disturbed just by seeding. So it seems to me, with the information you've provided us with today, that trying to have an exact number, a percentage in this case, clearly would be problematic. Right now, would you go through a certificate of approval process on a site-by-site basis?

Ms. Yamada: Yes.

Mrs. Munro: So your position would be to continue and maintain that?

Ms. Yamada: Yes.

The Chair: Thank you very much for your delegation today. We appreciate your being here.

This concludes the morning portion of our hearings. We will be recessed until 2:15 this afternoon.

The committee recessed from 1324 to 1418.

The Chair: I'm going to call this meeting to order. Good afternoon. This is the standing committee on general government and it's called to order. We're here this afternoon to resume public hearings on Bill 135, An Act to establish a greenbelt area and to make consequential amendments to the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act, the Oak Ridges Moraine

Conservation Act, 2001 and the Ontario Planning and Development Act, 1994.

As a caution, I would tell witnesses, while members enjoy parliamentary privileges and certain protections pursuant to the Legislative Assembly Act, it is unclear whether or not these privileges and protections extend to witnesses who appear before committees. For example, it may very well be that the testimony that you have given or are about to give could be used against you in a legal proceeding. I caution you to take this into consideration when making your comments.

I would also like to remind those in attendance that there should be no demonstration of support for or against any comments made by any presenters or members of the committee.

Lastly, if you have a cellphone, could you please turn it on to vibrate, otherwise it's a distraction to some of our delegations.

ONTARIO PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS INSTITUTE

The Chair: Our first delegation this afternoon is the Ontario Professional Planners Institute. Could they come forward, please? Good afternoon. Welcome. If you could identify the people who will be speaking this afternoon and the organization you represent. When you begin, you'll have 15 minutes. Should you leave time at the end, we'll be able to ask you questions.

Mr. Gregory Daly: Good afternoon. My name is Gregory Daly. I am the chair of policy development at the Ontario Professional Planners Institute. With me today, on your left, my right, is Melanie Hare—she's a member of our policy development committee—and Loretta Ryan, who is our staff manager of policy and communications at OPPI.

I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to speak and note that my remarks today are based on recommendations contained in our letter to the minister, which is dated December 17, 2004. Copies of that submission have been provided to you.

The Ontario Professional Planners Institute, also known as OPPI, is the recognized voice of the province's planning profession. OPPI provides leadership and vision on policy matters related to planning, development and other important socio-economic issues.

Over the years, OPPI has contributed to the reform of planning in Ontario and we've demonstrated a strong commitment to working with all governments. As the Ontario affiliate of the Canadian Institute of Planners, OPPI brings together 2,600 practising professional planners from across the province. In addition, we have approximately 400 student members. The breadth of our members' knowledge and the diversity of their experience provide OPPI with a unique perspective from which to contribute to planning reform. OPPI members work for government, private industry, a wide variety of agencies, not-for-profits and academic institutions, engaging in a broad range of practice areas, including urban and rural

community planning and design, and environmental assessment.

OPPI is a professional association, funded entirely by membership fees and its program and activity revenue. Through our public policy program we conduct research on planning issues and general quality-of-life issues. We distribute this information to our members, government, the public and the media. Our purpose is to provide objective and balanced submissions based on the collective experience and wisdom of our members.

We're pleased that the government is committed to improving the land use planning system in Ontario. The comments in our December submission were based on a detailed review of the greenbelt legislation and the corresponding draft plan. Comments related to the growth management plan were also offered, but in a more general nature given the absence of the specific draft growth plan for concurrent consideration.

OPPI supports, in principle, strong policies and mechanisms to implement a meaningful strategy for growth management and to protect a greenbelt area legacy. We commend the province for the substantial amount of work undertaken within an extremely ambitious time frame. Given the tremendous growth challenges facing Ontario, and in particular the greater Golden Horseshoe, the reinsertion of the province's lead in planning to manage growth is welcome.

Although we support the overall direction that the province has taken with regard to growth management, we are concerned that the proposed policy and legislative initiatives be brought forward in a manner that allows considered review of the critical details, consistency and coordination between complementary initiatives, and meaningful participation from stakeholders. In particular, we are concerned that while the discussion paper, *A Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, was released last summer, the draft growth plan has not yet been released. Assessing the merits of the draft greenbelt plan is difficult without this corresponding information. We understand that a draft growth plan will be released soon. We are looking forward to reviewing this plan.

The time allocated for the public, landowners, agencies and affected municipalities to meaningfully participate and comment on plans is very short. Further, the relationship to source water protection legislation is unclear. Clarification is required as to how the lands mapped as part of this process can be interrelated with the greenbelt plan area; also, the lack of a streamlined process identified for amending the text and mapping. It's essential that there is a plan to accommodate any needed corrections.

We recommend that approval of the greenbelt plan and passing of the act be deferred until the growth plan is brought forward. The two plans should be considered concurrently. We request that the draft growth plan be tabled as soon as possible so that any discrepancies between the two can be resolved in a timely manner.

The proposed greenbelt assembles a land base which includes the Oak Ridges moraine, the Niagara Escarp-

ment and the new territory of protected countryside. The provincial policy statement and other provincial policy and regulations also come into play. The result is multiple layers of existing and proposed legislation and policy. It is critical that there is clarity over which policies prevail; otherwise, this additional layer creates confusion and presents unsupportable burdens on the planning process.

More specifically, how will the province address any inconsistencies between the pending source water protection act provisions, as they may not overlap with the natural heritage system lands? That needs to be addressed.

With regard to aggregates and agricultural uses, there is an inconsistency between the Oak Ridges moraine act and Bill 135. The ORM act allows local municipalities to establish official plan or zoning that is more restrictive than the PPS but compliant with the ORM act. In the Greenbelt Act, municipalities are not permitted to establish official plan or zoning that is more restrictive. In addition to an apparent inconsistency, this raises the issue as to whether there should be a process whereby local municipalities should make the case for applying more restrictive policies on a site-specific case.

Also, clarification is needed for the definition of legal non-conforming uses and consideration given to whether utilizing a zoning order would address issues around this new kind of legal non-conforming use. Such a situation creates issues related to obtaining insurance and financing against land assets.

The area defined by the greenbelt raises many questions. There is a need to clarify and explain the parameters used in defining this territory. In particular, further information is needed on the following:

The basis for the delineation of the natural-heritage system, including what features and functions it consists of, requires definition.

The policy meaning and purpose of the water resource system and whether it's intended to consist of a specific spatial feature requires clarification.

The delineation of the boundaries needs to be substantiated. We are concerned about inclusions that do not have apparent natural heritage justification, exclusions where significant natural heritage features have been identified and boundaries which correspond to municipal jurisdictions or geopolitical boundaries as opposed to landforms.

The intention of the government to amend the defined area to reflect the source water protection mapping needs to be made clear.

The plan defers to local municipal plans to delineate exact boundaries for prime agriculture and rural lands within the agricultural system and for the precise boundaries of settlement areas. This would be better confirmed with environmental and other databases, where this information exists.

The implication for lands that are between the growth boundaries and the greenbelt boundaries needs to be articulated. This may be dealt with in the growth plan

but, in the absence of this, it's difficult to ascertain what will happen with these lands.

There is a need to address linkages within the plan and also where these linkages extend beyond the plan boundaries.

OPPI is pleased to see consistency in definitions by referring to the PPS, and it is critical that the basic planning definitions remain consistent throughout government initiatives. Further definitions of "water resource system" and "agricultural system" are required to ensure clarity.

Waste management is a key issue related to sustainable growth that is not addressed in any manner in the greenbelt plan. Policies related to waste management uses in the greenbelt should be outlined in the plan.

1430

There are many implications for landowners within the greenbelt area. In particular, the policies related to agricultural land use need to be supplemented with other strategies to support sustainable agricultural practices. Such a strategy should have reference to the PPS policies on agricultural severances and the Nutrient Management Act. A sustainable agricultural strategy should consider means of supporting and promoting existing agricultural uses; horticultural and field crop production such as greenhouse, organic farming and the like; agricultural supportive uses such as warehousing and processing; opportunities such as agri-tourism, entertainment, and educational operations such as pick-your-own, farm tours and rural heritage sites; and compensation on the basis of environmental benefits or credits.

We recommend that the province should prepare a sustainable agriculture strategy which recognizes the objective of agricultural protection with a range of mechanisms that support the agricultural land resource.

It is anticipated that areas outside the greenbelt, such as Simcoe, Wellington and Waterloo, will face issues related to additional development pressure as a result of the greenbelt area being designated. These implications must be addressed either by the greenbelt plan or the growth plan.

We recommend that the draft growth plan address and provide growth management direction for the communities on all sides of the greenbelt area.

With respect to retroactivity, OPPI does not support applying the new policies to applications that are in process for which a final decision has not yet been made. Many of the applications are in an advanced state and significant investments have been made on the part of applicants and municipalities.

In terms of implementation, Bills 135 and 136 propose to place approval authority at the provincial ministerial and cabinet level. While we support a strong leadership role in directing growth at the provincial level, this represents a significant shift in planning approach and may require some support for municipalities in interpreting and implementing the required amendments to their local planning policies. More specifically, we are concerned that the resources required to review and amend

plans may burden municipalities and there will be significant expenses and effort expended in making official plan amendments and zoning amendments.

We recommend that resources be made available, perhaps on a matching grant basis, to support local governments in their implementation of Bills 135 and 136.

OPPI supports the establishment of a greenbelt advisory council and growth management advisory councils. We request greater detail on the role, constitution and participants. We recommend that the councils include members of the planning profession. As the voice of Ontario's planning profession, we are interested in being involved.

We recommend that a citizen-based model should be considered for the advisory council, and this council should include at least one member of the planning profession.

We support the examination of the potential for development permits as a means to consider impacts on natural heritage features.

The mechanism, responsibilities and resources for ongoing management of the natural heritage system needs to be made clear. It is unclear which agencies are responsible or what resources they will have to make initiatives happen, such as municipal tax provisions, charitable donations and land trusts.

In addition, we note that considerable resources are required to implement the parkland policies of section 3.3.2 and the watershed plans referenced in section 3.2.3. Clarity is required.

We recommend that the province prepare a natural heritage system management strategy which outlines a set of mechanisms, responsibilities and financing options related to creating a sustainable natural heritage system.

The Chair: Mr. Daly, you have a minute and a half left.

Mr. Daly: OPPI is dedicated in its support of good community planning in this province, and planners can contribute substantially. We urge the government to draw upon OPPI, and we welcome the opportunity to meet with representatives of the ministry.

Thank you for this opportunity.

The Chair: We have about 30 seconds for each party, beginning with the government side.

Mr. Duguid: I appreciate the work you've put into your presentation and thank you for coming. I've got to say that of the members of your association that we've spoken to, the majority seem to be applauding what we're doing, so it does strike me as being in contradiction to what many of the members of your association have told us.

You talked about consultation and lack of consultation. I'm just wondering how much consultation you would have liked to have had.

The Chair: You're going to have to wrap that question up. Maybe you can answer that.

Ms. Melanie Hare: Thanks for the question and the opportunity to speak. We applaud the government's

initiative and would support the institution of a greenbelt. I should make that very clear. The length of the considerations in our presentation and our submission to you represents only the fact that we've wanted to look very carefully at what's put forward in draft legislation and the other initiatives, and to provide you with our comments. Our comments and considerations really relate to the implementation and implications of the Greenbelt Act, but we very strongly support the province stepping up to a stronger role in planning, and particularly in the establishment of a greenbelt.

The Chair: Thank you. The official opposition, Mr. Hudak.

Mr. Hudak: I thank the OPPI very much. I've got to say that I'm disappointed in the parliamentary assistant's rather aggressive questioning. This is the OPPI; they're not a partisan group. They've made some excellent recommendations and they've been perfectly consistent through Bill 26. You basically questioned whether they're representing their members. Shame on you. That was ridiculous. This is a well-thought-out presentation. You said—

The Chair: You're going to run out of time if you keep fighting. Continue.

Mr. Hudak: I'm disappointed in that approach by the government members. I think you have some excellent recommendations here, consistent with what you've been saying since Bill 26. Clearly there should be a broader attempt that takes in the growth side with the conservation side and the agriculture plan. I appreciate your making those points. Did I read that correctly?

Mr. Daly: Yes, you did. Thank you.

The Chair: Ms. Churley.

Ms. Churley: There isn't enough time to respond to all this, so I would simply ask you: You recommend holding off on going forward with the greenbelt until an awful lot of other pieces are put in place, particularly Places to Grow. How do you propose we deal with this, if that were to happen? The land is just sitting there in the meantime. You know what I'm getting at.

Mr. Daly: We don't anticipate necessarily that the greenbelt plan couldn't come into place at the same time as a growth plan—

Ms. Churley: But that's not ready yet.

Mr. Daly: —but in the absence of a draft growth plan and understanding it, and not having had it released—we understand it's imminent and we appreciate the fact that the government is working ambitiously to do that, but it's very important for the public, for private industry and for municipalities to see both plans, to understand and appreciate—

Ms. Churley: I understand what you're saying, but the question is—

The Chair: I don't know whether we can get into debate today.

Ms. Churley: —in the meantime, what happens? This land: Do you suggest it would be frozen, that we continue to freeze it in the meantime?

The Chair: Mr. Daly, I'm allowing you to answer the question, but we've exhausted our time.

Mr. Daly: In the absence of the growth plan, it would be helpful for some additional time. I don't have a time frame for that, but in the absence of a growth plan before March 9, as planners, we believe that some time to review that and to pursue the draft growth plan and what it means would be of benefit to everyone. Until that is released, I don't think I could give you a time frame, unfortunately, Madam Member, because we don't know what the scope of it is.

The Chair: Thank you for appearing here today. We appreciate it.

NORTH AJAX LAND-OWNERS COALITION

The Chair: Our next delegation is the landowners coalition from North Ajax. Perhaps you could identify yourself and the group you're speaking for. Once you've done that, you will have 15 minutes. Should you leave any time at the end, we'll be able to ask you questions about your presentation. I'll give you a one-minute warning if you get close to the end.

Ms. Lidia Kuleshnyk: Good afternoon. I'd like to thank the committee for providing myself and the landowners of North Ajax the opportunity to present today. My name is Lidia Kuleshnyk. I have a background as an environmental policy consultant, and I'm here today representing farmers, my parents and landowners in North Ajax whose lands are affected by the greenbelt plan and the Greenbelt Act.

But I'm also here today as a citizen, as a human being, as a humane being, who has dedicated my life to helping protect the environment and the health of others. Each one of you on this committee understands this dedication, for you too are representatives of the people. We are here today as fellow humanitarians, all wanting to protect the environment and human welfare, and wanting to do the right thing. So we must seriously consider the content and the consequences of the Greenbelt Act and the greenbelt plan.

1440

I have submitted to the committee a document outlining the key issues and recommendations from the North Ajax Land-Owners Coalition highlighting clauses in the Greenbelt Act pertaining to these issues. I will very briefly highlight these issues and review some of the key recommendations. The summary of these is in the back of the document.

First, let us identify the north Ajax region. The north Ajax region is in Durham region and can be generally defined as lands north of Taunton Road, west of Lakeridge Road, south of the Fifth Concession and in a defined area east of Brock Road. You can refer to the maps attached at the back of the document.

The number one key issue in north Ajax is the designation of lands as green space and the related boundaries. Under the greenbelt plan, there is an ambiguous and unjustified allocation of land designated as proposed

greenbelt and associated boundaries in the north Ajax region. There is an evident lack of clear and up-to-date scientific studies and evidence to support the designation of lands and boundaries within and surrounding the proposed greenbelt region in north Ajax. Specifically, why and how have the borders of the greenbelt plan been drawn in the north Ajax region, especially in areas where clearly one common parcel of land has been designated as two different zones pertaining to the greenbelt?

There are a number of farms, including my parents' farm, that are divided by the greenbelt. We use a site-specific example—my parents' farm, 2133 Audley Road—as an example of the ecology and general geophysical landscape of the north Ajax region, an example of a farm partially in the greenbelt and partially out. Very briefly, 2133 Audley Road is a 58.5-acre parcel of land, predominantly flat fields with about 5% bush and a small creek area. This land is not vital and strong enough to support basic ecosystem cycles of regeneration and maturation of crops and a diversity of species. Clearly, this land and the lands defined in the north Ajax region will soon lie fallow due to both overall ecosystem decline and related lack of economic viability of these lands and small farms.

Recommendation number 1 concerning these designations: It is recommended that the lands in the north Ajax region, and site-specific case 2133 Audley Road, not be included in the greenbelt plan and therefore not be governed by the Greenbelt Act in any capacity. This is based on two reasons. First, as stated, there is a lack of clear and up-to-date scientific evidence justifying these lands as green space. Two, evidence from the natural geophysical landscape illustrates that these lands are in no way environmentally sensitive and are in no way critical to the ecosystem of the region. It is recommended that if the greenbelt plan and the Greenbelt Act wish to identify any lands for rezoning, complete, substantiated and accountable scientific studies be conducted relating to all of the lands and environment, including human welfare, in the north Ajax region.

Recommendations concerning consultation process and time frame:

It is recommended that the Greenbelt Act and the greenbelt plan create a well-defined, accountable and equitable public consultation process and mechanism.

It is recommended that the greenbelt plan be redesigned from its origin to incorporate sound science in its development. As such, it is recommended that the greenbelt plan and act require at least four to five years for full and complete study.

It is recommended that the 10-year limitation on the Greenbelt Act and the greenbelt plan of review be abolished and accordingly amended, in order to respect the dynamic nature of ecosystems and the polices that govern those ecosystems.

Recommendation 3, concerning basic democratic and civil rights and liberties:

It is recommended that if the government of Ontario is able to provide substantive and conclusive evidence for

preserving and/or restricting land within the proposed green space, and if it chooses to restrict or rezone such lands, then each landowner affected must be fully and equitably financially compensated for their land by the government at competitive market prices.

It is recommended that the government of Ontario treat all of its citizens fairly and equally and that it honour human rights and civil liberties. The proposal for allowing public access on private lands would redefine these lands as public space, thus claiming private citizens' land as public government property. The government must then buy that land from the landowners at competitive market prices.

Recommendation 5, concerning the fact that the Greenbelt Act and the greenbelt plan exist within a vacuum, an ecosystem vacuum and a policy vacuum:

It is recommended that the Greenbelt Act should be developed, assessed and implemented, along with other legislation affecting the greenbelt, as part of a well-researched and well-defined strategy and package for consultation and policy development.

It is recommended that the Greenbelt Act should not necessarily take precedence when in conflict with any other act.

It is recommended that the Greenbelt Act should not be self-regulating, particularly if it is truly designed to protect both the environment and human and economic and social welfare. In order to provide sound protection for both the environment and human welfare, it is recommended that the Greenbelt Act and the greenbelt plan allow for a regular, possibly annual, review of the designation of lands and boundaries within the greenbelt area, and that the Greenbelt Act and the greenbelt plan allow that the total area of land within the greenbelt be decreased or increased according to the science supporting ecosystem and human welfare protection and sustainability. From an ecological science and environmental policy perspective, it is impossible to sweep 1.8 million acres of diverse ecosystem with one static policy brush.

Recommendation 6, concerning definition of "environment": The Greenbelt Act and the greenbelt plan do not provide a clear definition of "environment." It is recommended that the Greenbelt Act adopt the definition of "environment" according to the Environmental Assessment Act, since it is a clear, fair, equitable definition that has a longstanding record of success in honouring and protecting the environment.

1450

Recommendation 7, concerning restrictions on buildings and structures: It is recommended that the Greenbelt Act and the greenbelt plan clearly allow for the upgrading, maintenance and creation of farm structures and dwellings, including the family home on the farm, that support farm activity and the family farm as a unit.

Recommendation 8, concerning the exemption of the greenbelt plan as an undertaking under the Environmental Assessment Act: It is recommended that the Greenbelt Act should define the greenbelt plan as an

undertaking. If the greenbelt plan is not an undertaking, then how is it defined? So it should be defined as an undertaking according to the Environmental Assessment Act. As such, the greenbelt plan should be subject to the Environmental Assessment Act, including environmental assessments as well as those aspects of the Environmental Assessment Act that coordinate with other areas of the Greenbelt Act.

Recommendation 9, concerning the lack of an appeals process: It is recommended that a well-defined, legitimate and unbiased appeals process and associated mechanisms be established in which all citizens have fair and equal rights and treatment.

In conclusion, I ask each member of this committee, who here can look your constituents in the eye and honestly say that the Greenbelt Act as it now stands is fair, sound, humane legislation? Let us work together to amend the Greenbelt Act for the good of all. Thank you.

The Chair: You've left 30 seconds for each party, beginning with the official opposition.

Mr. Hudak: Lidia, thank you very much for your presentation. I do appreciate all the work you did and for making specific recommendations for amendments.

To answer your question, I think anybody unbiased listening to this committee would come to the judgment that no, it's not fair. There are fundamental problems with the science and the boundaries, so no, it's not sound. Therefore, because it's not fair and not sound, no, it's not humane.

Ms. Churley: Well, with just 30 seconds—it's my understanding that the municipality of Ajax is requesting more lands to be included in the greenbelt. There's not time, I know, but I wanted to know what your thoughts were on that, given your presentation.

Ms. Kuleshnyk: The North Ajax Land-Owners Coalition and myself do not support increasing the green space within the north Ajax region, based on the details that I just discussed, as well as the details in the document I've submitted.

Mrs. Van Bommel: The bill is still, of course, subject to amendment and clause-by-clause review. But the intent of the bill I fully support.

I have one question for you, though. You recommend that we wait five years. So in that interim, what are we to do? Are we to continue the freeze of those lands or do we allow sprawl and development to take them away—

Ms. Kuleshnyk: My understanding is that legislation exists in terms of planning and environmental assessment that provides adequate and sound protection in terms of urban growth boundaries and environmental assessment of lands. In those five years, sound, legitimate studies can be done to determine exactly what would be the best lands to be put in the greenbelt. As I mentioned earlier, I am an environmentalist. I do support protecting environmentally sensitive land for legitimate reasons.

The Chair: Thank you. Sorry; we're running out of time today. Thank you very much for your delegation. We appreciate your being here today.

UPPER GLEN FARMERS' ASSOCIATION

The Chair: Our next delegation is the Upper Glen Farmers' Association. Good afternoon, and welcome. Please identify yourself for Hansard, giving your name and the group you represent. You'll have 15 minutes. I will give you a warning as you get close to the end or if you exceed your time.

Mr. Rick Stull: Thank you, Madam Chair. I've heard that a few times in the last three days.

The Chair: Good. I just want to make sure everybody has the same opportunity.

Mr. Stull: Thank you. My name is Rick Stull. I represent the Upper Glen Farmers' Association. It's a pretty small association. It's myself and the Archdekin family. We reside in Halton Hills, specifically on the 8th Line just north of Wildwood Road and close to 22 Side Road, on lots 22 and 23; and the Archdekin family have lot 22 on 10 Side Road. I'm going to show you specifically where that is on the map. If you look at the handout I gave you, you're going to see the greenbelt map attached. Specifically, this would be our farm here, along with this section as well. These are the Archdekin lands down here. The Main Street of Glen Williams is here, and the main intersection of Glen Williams. The town centre, basically, is right there.

Let me talk about my family first of all. My family came up from the United States and was deeded property on the 8th Line, the farms north of here. The farms north of here are not on this map, but one of the farms is actually shown on here. We were deeded that after the American Revolution. We are Empire Loyalists. We're one of the oldest families in Halton, so don't call me a speculator.

A little bit about the demographics of my area: This is Highway 7 right here. It takes you into Georgetown and up to Acton. For some specifics on these demographics, we are surrounded on three sides by residential development: an estate subdivision to the southeast of our property and strip development to the south and southeast of our property and to the west of our lands as well.

Here are some actual demographics of our area. From Highway 7 to 22 Side Road—that's right here, from here to here, just under a mile—there are 39 homes in that one-mile stretch. From 22 Side Road down to Wildwood Road—that is past my property; I want you to keep in mind that there has not been a severance south of our farm—there are 44 homes. We have a residential subdivision that backs on to our lands, this estate development here. These are expensive homes in the neighbourhood of \$1 million. This is the high-end area of Georgetown—52 homes. This area right here, which also backs on to our property—I hope you can see that all right—has been approved for another estate subdivision. In other words, there are going to be 13 more homes put on that land. Now that may change. Right now, it's before regional council, the region. The municipality has approved the subdivision, and actually the new official plan of the glen. It's before regional council.

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It doesn't make sense for 13 homes to be put out in the middle of nowhere, and the region has asked for all these properties now to be put on sewer. In fact, those 13 homes may change in quantity, probably upwards, because of the cost of bringing in servicing. The region doesn't want any more development on septic. Everything I've shown you there is septic systems, so a lot of septic systems in a small area.

Anyone who travels the area at all knows that Highway 7, 22 Side Road, 8th Line, Wildwood Road corridor is the bypass to Brampton. In other words, commuters from Guelph, Acton and so on, those outlying areas, use that to go around Georgetown, which is darn slow to get through. I don't blame them. I'd use it myself.

But the fact is, we farm there. We have a purebred Angus herd. We are legitimate farmers. I went to ag school. We show cattle all over southern Ontario at fairs. You'll actually see us downtown at the Royal sometimes. It's not easy farming there. In the mornings, the traffic is utterly impossible; in the evenings, it's the same.

The residential subdivision to my southeast has changed the landscape. They've changed the grades. What's happened is that they've blocked off all the water. In your handout, you'll see the ponding that's happened on our property. They've taken down our line fences and put up their own, put up their own gates. They're dumping their garbage on my property. They're using my property for storage. I'm not here to complain about this. It's just a fact that with urban people beside farmers, you're going to have this, OK? The municipality can't do anything about it. I can charge one fellow—you might see him in one picture there, a fellow I actually caught with my camera. I can have him charged. What would be the point?

Mr. Duguid: On the right?

Mr. Stull: Yeah, you got him. He's going through his nice wrought iron fence back on to his million-dollar property, storing his stuff on my land, which now, because of the greenbelt, is worth about as much as his half-acre piece of property. Don't call me a speculator, but don't tell me you haven't hurt my property value, because you have.

I've heard a lot of good representations in this whole four days of discussions from valid farmers. You heard from the Moore family, who were before us in the line. I consider the Moores friends and neighbours. The Moores live six or seven miles from me, but they're my neighbours, because you know what? There's no farming left here. The farming north of me, the lands that my ancestors farmed, it's tillable land. In other words, it's flat, arable land. It's good land. It is the buffer for the Niagara Escarpment. When I say "buffer," this is something that hasn't been addressed here.

Everyone talks about the Niagara Escarpment as if it's—you know, when you hit the edge of that boundary of the Niagara Escarpment, there's a sheer cliff there. Well, that's simply not the case. There are four farms

before you hit the Niagara Escarpment and our property. We're not alone there. If you travel Halton, we're not the only people who have that. In other places in Halton, there are three spots where both the Niagara Escarpment and the greenbelt come tight to the sheer face. When I say that, it's within Carlos Delgado hitting a home run there. You know what I'm saying? That close. There seems to be an inconsistency there. In fact, I think you already have your greenbelt. In my area, you have your greenbelt.

Those farms aren't worth as much because they're on the Niagara Escarpment. That's just the fact. A farm sold just up the road from me without a house on it; he had a heck of time going through the Niagara Escarpment Commission to get a permit for his house. If it had been on my property, not being the Niagara Escarpment, it would have been worth more than double. So there's a huge difference from Niagara Escarpment land to non-Niagara Escarpment land. You have to realize that.

If folks put this greenbelt in—and I don't think it's about farming. I don't think it's about farming one little bit. I don't think you're concerned about farming. I think you're concerned about the urban people. I say that because I know the farmers around. I have friends I went to school with, farmers around Guelph and Kitchener-Waterloo. It's honestly some of the best farmland—right, Lou? Honest to God, it's some of the best farmland in Ontario.

I know Kitchener has its own problem with sewer—the Ontario planners brought that up—dumping raw sewage into the rivers because they're over capacity now. And you want to put more out there. You want to eat up that farmland that produces almost twice what we can produce in Halton. And you're telling us you're saving farming? You're helping us? You're making sure that Ontario has enough arable land to feed its population? Do you realize that from Highway 400 west produces 80% of our food? Does anyone realize that? Of that 80%, 0.5% of 1% is in Halton. We're talking about a speck.

Do you know what the biggest land use is in Halton? Greenhouses and specialty crop. You know what specialty crop is? What's specialty crop? Specialty crop is greenhouses and sod farms. The second-biggest use is horses and ponies. That's reality; that's the truth. What are you saving? You're saving it for the urban people, not helping any farmers. The farmers who came here spoke from the heart. They're the only ones left, they're the last line, and you're not helping them. You're hurting them. You're taking away their equity, you're taking away their property value. You're going to allow development throughout the greenbelt in the form of roads, gas lines and garbage dumps, and you're going to get the land at a reduced rate because it's in the greenbelt. I want you to comment on that later, all right? Explain it to me, convince me, because I am not convinced.

I hear Marilyn talk here and I haven't heard anything that helps the farmer. I understand the environmental concerns, Marilyn. I think everyone does.

The Chair: Mr Stull, if you want anybody to comment, you've only got three minutes left.

Mr. Stull: Three minutes?

The Chair: Yes. You can either summarize or you can wait and hear from each member.

Mr. Stull: Jeez, I didn't think I could talk that long.

The Chair: You did.

Mr. Stull: I'm going to summarize, because you know what? I want to hear from you folks. I'll answer your questions. Go ahead.

The Chair: OK. The first question would be from Ms. Churley.

Ms. Churley: What were you just going to tell me? I'll give you that opportunity.

Mr. Stull: I see you chumming around with members of environmental groups. I don't see you chumming around with any farmers and getting their input, and that's bothersome to me. I've seen it for three days. I missed yesterday. I'm sure the same thing happened yesterday.

Ms. Churley: It's not so, but we don't have time to go into it. I talked to a lot of farmers yesterday.

Mr. Stull: Ask me a question, then, about farming and about farm equity and I'll answer it for you.

Ms. Churley: Actually, yesterday, as you know—you weren't there yesterday, I guess—there were a great many farmers. We did have quite a few exchanges and we heard a lot of the frustrations from farmers. I believe, with or without the greenbelt, you've got a whole bunch of problems. Now, you didn't touch on many of the ones that farmers touched on yesterday. You were more into some of your own personal issues with neighbours and various other things. But you know, we had good exchanges about the kinds of things we need to see the government bring forward in terms of special farm programs to keep farms viable. I think that's absolutely critical. It's not just about the greenbelt, it's about a whole bunch of other things—lack of programs, free trade, commodity prices, you name it—that need to be looked at and acted on, right?

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Mr. Stull: No problem there, ma'am. That's the first time I heard it come from you, but that's great. Thank you.

The Chair: From the government side?

Mr. Lalonde: What type of farm do you have?

Mr. Stull: We have purebred Angus cattle.

Mr. Lalonde: It's not a dairy farm, though?

Mr. Stull: No, not unless you can get one of them to stay still long enough to—

Mr. Lalonde: Do you intend to continue farming?

Mr. Stull: Yes.

Mr. Lalonde: You do? At the present time, if you wanted to increase the acreage, with no greenbelt plan in place before, you would be stuck with the land prices that have gone skyrocketing.

Mr. Stull: In my case, because I've got just to the north of me the NEC—I mean, that land is available at a price. If you want to talk about expanding a farm, I've got 164 acres there. I came from a pig farm originally. I checked into putting a pig barn up here. I know that

business. I know I can make money at it. You know what? There's not one spot on this 164 acres where I can put a pig barn. It's 400-metre setbacks. To put—

Interjection.

Mr. Stull: Let me finish. To put a 1,000-head pig barn up—that's what it is these days. It's factory farms. It's 500 pigs in and 500 pigs out. That's the way it works. There's not one spot. You tell me where to farm, Jean. Where am I supposed to increase?

The Chair: I'm sorry, we don't have time for the answer on that one.

From the official opposition?

Mrs. Munro: I just want to echo some messages and sentiments that have been expressed previously by members of our party in the sense that we understand the importance of agricultural viability and certainly look to the government to respond to the kinds of challenges that you and others have raised on the issue of viability.

The other one, that in a certain way you alluded to, is the issue of growth. The government has put out a discussion document on growth, but they haven't come forward with a plan. I think the issues that you describe, rightly so, in terms of your neighbours speak to the growing importance, the critical importance of providing some kind of plan for growth, because at the end of the day, frankly, we all want you there because we all get hungry. I think more people need to understand that it's not just green fields we're looking at; we're looking at our food supply.

Mr. Stull: Thank you, Marilyn—er, Julia. I'm thinking Marilyn. You know those Black Angus ads you all hear from Quiznos? That's American beef. So don't have any illusions here. The beef comes this way; it doesn't go the other way. They process that meat down in the States and it's coming here. Why can't our cattle be—that's a good point. Why can't we have our own products here?

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Stull. Thank you very much for coming today. We appreciate it.

Mr. Hudak: Chair, if I could, I just want a point of clarification from the government side. Thank you, Rick. You did a fabulous job. It was a pleasure meeting your wife too in Caledon. I think the government has maintained the point that land values in the greenbelt are going to increase. M. Lalonde's questions to Mr. Stull—I think in effect his line of questioning was that he can expand his farm now because the greenbelt will keep the prices lower.

Mr. Lalonde: Yes.

Mr. Hudak: The answer is yes to my question. I appreciate that honesty. But what is it from the government: Will the land values increase or decrease? You've been talking out of both of your sides of your mouth on the issue.

Mr. Lalonde: Because not having a greenbelt plan, that's what the people were doing before. They were buying land, speculating, and now the farmer who wants to expand can't afford to buy that piece of land.

The Chair: Mr. Hudak, are you asking for an official report from staff on this so you have an ability to make

better amendments later on? Because I don't know that this is a place for debate. We have delegations waiting. If you could ask for research, we can provide that.

Mr. Hudak: I'd actually like clarification on the government's position. M. Lalonde just indicated that land values will go down in the greenbelt, but the minister has said that land values will go up in the greenbelt. I'd just like a clarification of what the official government position is on this, because it has suddenly become contradictory.

The Chair: I think we will provide that for you with research to append it—

Interjection.

The Chair: I don't know that we want the debate right now. We have too many delegations waiting and we are behind time.

Mr. Duguid: He's talking about the difference between rezoned developable lands and non-rezoned lands.

The Chair: We're not getting into that debate right now. If you want the information, we can get it. We will have that debate later on, but not now.

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WATERLOO

The Chair: Our next delegation is the regional municipality of Waterloo. Could they please come forward? Good afternoon and welcome. You must have been in our green room.

Mr. Ken Seiling: They said they'd come for us but didn't.

The Chair: We have a special green room, if we get the overflow. Thank you for being here and being patient. Welcome. Good afternoon. Please identify the people who are going to be speaking this afternoon and the group you represent. When you begin, you will have 15 minutes. Should you use all of your time, there will be no opportunity for questions. If you get close to the end of your time, I will give you a one-minute warning.

Mr. Seiling: Thank you. I'm actually glad you were running behind because the 401 wasn't running very well and we were an hour behind getting here today.

I want to thank you for giving us the opportunity. My name is Ken Seiling. I'm the regional chair for the regional municipality of Waterloo. With me today is Mr. Larry Kotseff, who is our commissioner of planning, housing and community services, and Mr. Kevin Curtis, who's the manager of policy planning, both of whom have had a major role in the planning work at the region of Waterloo and, more particularly, the extensive work on growth management that has been underway in our region over the past three and a half years. I believe you have copies. I gave a copy of my comments that you already have in front of you, so I'll make sure I move along fairly quickly.

We welcome this opportunity to speak to the proposed legislation and the direction the government is pursuing to plan for our collective future.

It would be an understatement to say that the region of Waterloo is strongly supportive of the government's commitment to manage growth as reflected in the Greenbelt Act and the Places to Grow initiative. This is bold, forward-looking planning for this province and we commend the government for it and for the level of consultation that has and is occurring around it and other related initiatives.

Before commenting on the act, I'd first like to provide a bit of context. There are many parallels between what is happening today and the situation in this province in the 1960s. It was clear to the government at that time that Ontario, and particularly southern Ontario, was to face a surge in growth that would outstrip both the resources and the 1849 governmental framework that existed.

A variety of studies, such as Design for Development and the Toronto-Centred Plan, were prepared by the province to establish a framework for that growth. It was predicated on an urban form, anchored in transit systems capable of shaping and supporting the urban form. It has always been accepted that transit is one, if not the most important, key to a sustainable urban form.

The 1960s plan was also rooted in an understanding that both provincial and regional planning were key to making it work. To its credit, the government of the day began to reshape the municipal scene, creating regional structures, such as the region of Waterloo, which were capable of providing region-wide planning and regional services.

One of the first tasks assigned to the new regions was to develop a regional plan. In some of the new regions, opposition to the new governance led to a lack of resolve in creating new regional plans. This was especially true, I believe, in the greater Toronto area. In fact, after the strong initial start, provincial resolve seemed to fail, and it appeared that the province in essence abandoned the notion of planned, coordinated growth in the GTA for a period of almost 20 years. The results of this are clearly obvious and are why we are here today.

In our region, the early vision was taken on with great enthusiasm. The region of Waterloo was the first jurisdiction in the province to successfully develop and implement a regional plan. Approved in 1976, the regional official policies plan, the ROPP, was a visionary growth plan which included significant protection for agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands, an identified central transit corridor and other leading-edge planning approaches.

The original ROPP and its successors have provided clear direction to subsequent Waterloo regional and lower-tier governments up to and including today. Urban envelopes were established which went on to withstand the test of time. We have implemented extensive groundwater protection policies and consistently undertaken subwatershed planning. If there was a weakness, it was that transit was not a regional responsibility until the year 2000.

Two years ago, Waterloo region approved a new growth management plan, the regional growth manage-

ment strategy, or the RGMS, which basically built on the 1976 ROPP by establishing a hard countryside line, promoting urban intensification and infill as one of the primary growth areas, even stronger farmland and environmental land protection policies and promoting a central rapid transit corridor as one of the major planning tools in shaping our future urban form.

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Today, we are still working on implementing this plan, which will allow us to manage growth up to a population of approximately 700,000, or a 50% increase, in a sustainable manner.

As you can see, the strategic directions and initiatives contained in our RGMS and the ROPP clearly complement the province's Strong Communities-based planning reform agenda. Indeed, when the current provincial plans were introduced over the last few months, it was very encouraging to hear the province say that they had borrowed heavily from our work.

So it is in this context that I present a region of Waterloo response to the Greenbelt Act.

The region of Waterloo is strongly supportive of the draft greenbelt plan. As we have noted in previous submissions to the province—and therein we have created a submission with all our appendices in it—many of the greenbelt plan's policies, such as strong protection for prime agricultural areas, firm settlement area boundaries and the protection of water resources, are core principles of our own ROPP and RGMS and have always been and continue to be incorporated into our related programs.

Given this compatibility and to ensure that we are able to continue to successfully implement the RGMS, the region of Waterloo recommends that the greenbelt protection plan be extended to include environmentally sensitive and agricultural lands in the region of Waterloo and the greater Golden Horseshoe, or the "outer ring." It is a good plan for communities in the greater Toronto-Hamilton area and it would be an equally good plan for communities in the outer ring.

It is our position that Bill 135 would be considerably strengthened with its extension to the outer-ring communities. While provincial data demonstrates that there are sufficient lands within the currently identified greenbelt to accommodate projected growth to 2031, the expanded size of the greenbelt means that there will be a perception that development opportunities within the Golden Horseshoe are becoming increasingly constrained. Like I say, it's a perception.

We anticipate that this may lead to increased development pressures on Waterloo region and other outer-ring communities, including increased speculative land buying. This practice is already occurring, with large GTA development firms buying or optioning large tracts of agricultural lands in Brant and Simcoe counties for future suburban development.

The past experience of Waterloo region demonstrates that a strong and well-enforced official growth plan can provide a great degree of protection for such vulnerable lands.

I personally do not believe that farmers, developers and owners of lands in areas not approved for development have a right to make a case for development rights or values. The decision of the previous government to actually compensate developers for land not necessarily approved for development in the Oak Ridges moraine has, in my opinion, set a bad precedent.

The concept of zoning and official plans has long existed and needs to be reinforced. I can well remember, in the early days of the ROPP in our region, that a number of people who held lands bought speculatively or otherwise outside of the designated development areas came to council seeking exemptions in the hopes of getting around the regional plan. Regional council was firm in its refusal to allow this to happen, and this consistent resolve helped curtail speculative land-buying in the region.

Today, if you drive in some areas of Waterloo region, you can see urban development on one side of a road and active, locally owned farms on the other side. Speculative land-buying in these areas virtually ceased, and there is no local expectation that these lands have a value other than the farming or environmental uses that are currently being applied to them. The ROPP has survived and served our community well, and we are building on it with our growth management strategy.

Specifically, the region would like to see the greenbelt area extended to include the Galt, Paris and Waterloo moraines, as well as areas that are being considered for designation as environmentally sensitive landscapes, and there's a reference in the submission. These environmentally sensitive significant lands serve an important function in maintaining overall water balance and ecological health within the Grand River watershed, which supports approximately one million residents of Ontario. The moraines themselves are the source of about 75% of Waterloo region's water supply.

Accordingly, our view is that the moraines found in the region of Waterloo are provincially significant from a source water perspective and therefore should be accorded the same level of protection as provincially significant features in other parts of the Golden Horseshoe.

This would implement the region's growth management strategy vision of protection for key environmental areas, protection of the countryside for agricultural use and restrictions on urban expansion to the west of the current urban boundaries. In that it would be implemented by provincial statute, a greenbelt extension would entrench the outcome of our growth management strategy and thereby provide greater certainty as to its implementation.

The region of Waterloo believes that extending the Greenbelt Act in this way and packaging it with our recommended broader strategies will move us forward toward our common agenda of balancing environmental protection and growth needs.

If the province chooses not to extend the greenbelt at this time, we respectfully request that the province draft

parallel greenbelt legislation for the balance of the outer ring or find other alternative ways of providing the same level of protection for these sensitive areas.

The final area of focus I would like to touch upon relates to Waterloo region's ability to respond to increased rates of projected growth—the necessary nuts and bolts of managing such growth.

Our ability to successfully manage the rate and magnitude of anticipated future growth is dependent on a substantial financial commitment by the provincial and federal governments to provide support for required physical and social infrastructure. For Waterloo region, this includes ongoing financial support for critical infrastructure, including the development of a rapid transit system, facilities and technologies to implement the region's long-term water strategy and wastewater master plan, and new health and education facilities and services.

It is important that the province ensure that municipalities have adequate funding, as well as the appropriate financial and planning tools, to implement both the provincial and regional growth management plans.

As I stated at the outset, the region of Waterloo strongly supports the government of Ontario's efforts to build strong communities and protect the environment. The province and the region need to work collaboratively with other stakeholders to develop, implement and finance an extensive range of policies, regulations, facilities and services to achieve these goals.

The regional official policies plan and the regional growth management strategy are two strong expressions of how the region of Waterloo intends to help realize this common agenda together with the province.

More than 20 years ago, the ball was dropped when the province failed to carry through on the plans and reforms begun in the 1960s. If we fumble again, the price will be much higher. Within a few years, we will see urban sprawl, environmental degradation and extended gridlock. This province will not be a place we want for our children.

The region of Waterloo remains committed to comprehensive growth management and is willing to work with the province to move forward with legislation that meets our common agenda. Our ability to create a sustainable legacy for our children depends on it.

Thanks for your consideration.

The Chair: Thank you. You've given a minute a half to each group to ask questions, beginning with the government side.

Mr. Duguid: Thank you very much, Mr. Seiling, for joining us today. I want to thank you as well, because I know the minister and all members on the government side would want to thank you and express our appreciation for your great work on Bill 126. I know you and your region were very involved in our considerations during that time, so I thank you for your input, because it was instrumental as we moved forward.

The way we see this rolling out now is that we're looking to Places to Grow as being one of the vehicles

for working with you in terms of the growth in the Waterloo area. The provincial policy statement will also be critical. Certainly, we'll look forward in the future to further input. I know your thinking is probably the possibility of extending the greenbelt out that way. We're not closing the door to that possibility either. How do you see the provincial policy statement, for instance, helping you in terms of controlling your growth in that area?

Mr. Seiling: The provincial policy statements and the way they're going right now really reinforce the things we've already passed and are trying to do locally. We think that given the additional assistance of the province, that will give added strength.

I remember back when the regional plans were being created in the 1970s, when we were faced with some of these issues, having the weight of the province behind us at that time created greater public acceptance and made it much easier politically to carry off these things. They were essential, and these things that may have been fought out at the time are now considered to be generally accepted across the region. The farming community and everybody else accepts it.

Mrs. Munro: Thank you for coming today. I just want to ask you a question about the outer ring. Clearly, your submission is supporting the notion that the initiatives that would be begun under the greenbelt legislation you want to have included in the larger area. Are there communities within the outer ring, as you suggest, that are under the same kinds of pressures—besides Waterloo, where there may not be the same kind of commitment that you have to a regional plan? Are they under the pressures that the communities inside the greenbelt area are? The second part of my question is, what happens then to the edge of the outer ring, next outer ring?

Mr. Seiling: First of all, I think there are reasonable differences to which this will apply. Secondly, I would say—and it's really not my place to comment on other jurisdictions, but while the region of Waterloo has a long history of strong planning, I think there are other areas that weren't regionalized. I would say Simcoe county is a case where there are huge pressures up there, with a fractured government structure that isn't really as equipped as we are to deal with some of these issues. The government is going to have to deal with some of the areas that don't have the regional frameworks behind them. With a fractured system, there's no central coordination in that whole area to pull this off unless the government imposes one or changes the governance structure behind it. It's not my place to talk about that, but you asked me the question and I offer you my opinion.

1530

Ms. Churley: Thank you very much for your input today. I agree with you. I think it's great that you're here asking the government to include more lands. On your behalf, I would like to use my time to ask the government, given that the region is asking to have these

lands included in the greenbelt, why don't you just do that?

The Chair: You don't really expect an—

Ms. Churley: Yes, I do. I think it's a perfectly legitimate question. They're asking to be included and there are scientific reasons for having them included. Parliamentary assistant?

The Chair: OK, you're giving your time. Mrs. Van Bommel, you have the remaining time.

Mrs. Van Bommel: It's a little unusual. I wasn't sure if, in the protocol, I was allowed to respond. Essentially, the plan is a draft plan so all these kinds of submissions are being taken into consideration. We've had, as you well know, many applications from people who want inclusion. All of that is before us. It is still a draft plan.

Mr. Seiling: I should add that we have already designated our hard edges and our greenbelt areas. We just think that being put in the plan gives them one more level of security.

The Chair: We appreciate your input today. Thank you very much for coming.

Mr. Seiling: Thank you for the time.

KAGAN SHASTRI

The Chair: Our next delegation is Kagan Shastri, barristers and solicitors. Good afternoon and welcome. Please introduce yourself and the organization you speak for today. When the hubbub subsides, you will have 15 minutes.

Mr. Ira Kagan: Good afternoon, Madam Chair. My name is Ira Kagan and the list of people I am speaking on behalf of is part of my presentation, schedule A. It has been detailed according to their names and where their lands are. In essence, they are landowners in Ajax, Pickering and Markham.

For the record, I'd like to say that I'm a municipal lawyer with about 15 years experience. I have represented and continue to represent municipalities, conservation authorities, residents' groups, landowners and developers. So I work all sides of the question and I hope that gives me some objective perspective on the needs of all the groups.

I've organized my presentation into six recommendations, and there are tabs included to assist you in seeing where the land is.

My first recommendation is that the government not pass the Greenbelt Act until the growth plan and other provincial intensification initiatives are also passed, and I'd like to explain why that's very important.

This government has acknowledged that the greenbelt is only half the equation. The other half of the equation is how to accommodate the growth that's coming. You can ignore it if you want, but it's coming anyway. In fact, you shouldn't ignore it, you should embrace it, because it is what drives the Ontario economy and what drives the Canadian economy.

The greenbelt relies upon and is premised upon the fact that there will be sufficient land left to accommodate

the growth, but there has been no proof of this, and if you have proof, you haven't released it. I've gone to the province's Web site recently to see the six pages of justification. It's not enough. If I were to come forward with an application to impose a greenbelt or to allow growth, I'd be expected to do more than that.

The greenbelt plan is also dependent upon intensification rules being brought into place. These intensification rules will be changes to the provincial policy statement, the Planning Act and some new rules as well. All too often, when people try to intensify in existing urban areas, they are met with fierce opposition from existing residents or municipalities. Those rules need to be changed.

My fear here, and I think it's a real danger, is that the province will pass the Greenbelt Act and plan, get some political mileage out of that, because it will be looking very green, and then when it tries to bring forward the much tougher rules about how to accommodate growth in existing areas, it's going to get bogged down. It's going to be opposed by all residents' groups and many municipalities. Frankly, it may just get sent off to committee forever, and there may be another provincial election before that decision is made. Then we'd be left with the worst of all worlds: a permanent greenbelt and no means to accommodate the growth. That would be the worst for everybody.

Recommendation number 2: Amend the Greenbelt Act to allow rights of appeal and amendment and wait until the greenbelt plan is finalized before passing the act.

I know that the act is just enabling legislation, but you don't really know what effect the Greenbelt Act has on you until you see the plan and the policies, and there's no guarantee that the plan and the policies will be implemented on March 9. What I had understood was that the act would be passed first and the plan would come later. Well, how is anybody supposed to know exactly how the act is going to impact them unless they have the plan to compare it to at the same time? We know that the plan is just draft right now. You have to have them both at the same time.

You have transition rules in the act that say that if there's a matter that's already under application, it may have to comply with prescribed rules. Nobody knows what that means. First of all, it's "may," so you may have to and you may not have to. And you don't even know what the prescribed rules would be, because they're not prescribed yet. So you don't know whether you like the act or you don't like the act; it's too unclear. Put them together at the same time.

There are no rights of appeal and no ability for people to apply to amend errors in the act. Why? What is the government afraid of? If you've got it right, allow the testing. I don't understand the opposition to testing. If you've got the science behind it, allow it to be tested. Let other equally intelligent people test the science. Release all the documents you have, and if people think there's a mistake, allow us to make that case. One of the recommendations of the Greenbelt Task Force was to have an

appellant tribunal or a hearings officer, because they realize that if you don't have the ability to test the decision, you can't agree with the decision, you can't satisfy yourself that it's the right decision. In a democracy, it is very rare that decisions are made and the answer is, "Well, you can't test it, but trust us. We got it right, and we have the science." That's very rare, and it's not the way our system works.

The greenbelt has to be based on real science, not political science, not voodoo science. It has to be based on principles of good planning and on Smart Growth, Smart Growth principles like efficient use of existing infrastructure, cost-effective infrastructure expansion, locating new growth adjacent to existing urban areas, preventing leapfrog development, protecting valuable environmentally sensitive lands, and protecting long-term viable farmland by use of proven analysis such as LEAR. This was another recommendation of the Greenbelt Task Force. All of these principles I mentioned are the kinds of principles you have in an OMB hearing, in council decisions where there are debates, not in closed-room meetings where the final decision is made on the line with no ability to test. Again, if you're sure you've got it right, what you are afraid of in having appeals and having amendments tested?

I attended almost every public meeting on the greenbelt. Some of you people will have seen me there at every public meeting. I asked every single time, "If you've got all this science, please release it to us so we can test it." We never got any of that science in those meetings, and until recently, very little was posted on the government's Web site.

To illustrate some of the problems that I mentioned, I offer three examples; they're in the tabs. The first one is in Ajax. Could I ask you, please, to turn to the last page of tab 1? This really illustrates the issue better than anything else. These lands are north of Taunton Road, south of the 5th Concession, and between Salem Road and Audley Road. Almost every single inch of this land is either built upon right now or approved for development. Even the greenbelt plan wouldn't change that. You've got 68 existing houses on full municipal water. You've got a 900-person clubhouse and banquet hall on waters and sewers. You have another 27-lot subdivision approved on waters and sewers, and the rest is approved for golf courses, plus an existing school. Can you believe it? Half this land is proposed to be in the greenbelt. All these houses are proposed to be in the greenbelt. What possible sense does that make? This is what I'm saying: You haven't got it right, but you don't allow any testing.

Do you want to know what the effect of this is? The effect of this would be that these 68 houses that are on septic systems wouldn't be allowed to connect to the urban services that are right at their doorstep. The greenbelt would prevent that. So you're going to keep them on septic when a cleaner, more environmentally friendly and safer solution is right at their door, at no cost to the municipality or the province. That's what the greenbelt plan does. What's the rationale for that? First

of all, why would you put existing houses in the greenbelt—I can't understand that, because it's not reflective of what's on the ground—and then why would you prevent them from hooking up to services that are already there? You haven't got it right. You've got to allow the testing.

What you should do is have a series of principles in the act. Those are the principles that the hearing officer would apply. You set the policy; the hearing officer makes sure you've got it right.

Now I want to move over to Pickering, to show you how it affects lands in Pickering. These are the lands called the Duffins-Rouge agricultural preserve. This is at tab 2.

1540

The city undertook a two-year growth management study. This growth management study studied every aspect of the lands in Seaton and the agricultural preserve. There has been some suggestion, I understand, that because the funding for the study came from landowners in the preserve, somehow it's tainted. Absolutely not true. I don't know if you know this or not, but it is approved policy in official plans, official plans that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs approves—I've got it at the very end of tab 4—that to spare taxpayers the expense of urban expansions, the municipalities hire the consultants and the consultants are paid for by the applicants or the landowners. It's not done so the study can be bought. These consultants can't be bought. It's done so that the existing taxpayers don't have to pay the freight for something that they may not want or that may not go ahead. So to call these studies bought studies or bogus studies is really to do a complete disservice to the hard-working people who do the studies.

The government does not have a study that can equate to the study that Pickering did, and yet they basically ignore it. These lands are right next to existing urban lands. Seaton is leapfrogging. It leapfrogs over the lands that are right next to existing urban, and yet the province's plan is to develop Seaton instead. These lands enjoy \$100 million worth of public infrastructure, public money. That's all going to go to waste.

These lands are not environmentally sensitive lands. In fact, truth be told, the Seaton lands are more environmentally friendly. The reason they are more environmentally friendly and sensitive is because most of them haven't even been farmed. They're pristine, original forests and streams. Farming in large part changes the natural landscape, whereas Seaton hasn't been changed. These lands are not important agricultural lands. You can call them that if you want, but make no mistake, it won't become that way. These lands have been agricultural since the beginning, yet they're not viable. You, Ms. Van Bommel, asked the OFA for an opinion as to whether or not these lands were agriculturally viable. They wrote you and said no, and they gave reasons. Who better than the farmers to know whether they are viable or not? Again, just calling them agricultural and putting them in the greenbelt will not keep them that way. The very best

way to keep lands viable for farming is to protect and help the farmers, and they will do your job for you. Drawing a line on the map is not the answer.

My next example is in Markham. This is really the other side of the question, so if you could turn to tab 3, you'll see how I illustrate my point. You've got lands that are included in the greenbelt, and then you have lands that are not in the greenbelt, and the notion is that these lands that are outside the greenbelt are not urban yet, but they could one day become urban with the appropriate justification. These are the areas in buff that you say could accommodate future growth.

The difficulty, though, is that when you apply the greenbelt rules to these lands—because, make no mistake, greenbelt rules do apply to lands off the greenbelt in many circumstances—together with the existing rules, do you have land left that you can develop? The answer is, in large cases, no. You're giving false hope to this buff area. It's not going to be developed. What we had our consultants do was draw a map that shows the differing layers of existing approvals and existing policy on these lands to show the fragmented lands that would be left. You can't get roads into some of these lands. They are too small to develop; the crossings would kill you. They would be unaffordable or simply undevelopable.

This is another example of how I say you have to bring the growth plan and the greenbelt plan and the act together at the same time and allow for testing, because if you make a mistake, it's a long-term mistake.

My third recommendation is that the greenbelt plan should exempt all lands south of Highway 407 from the greenbelt. I can't, for the life of me, understand why anybody would include lands south of the 407 in the greenbelt. This is the most expensive, most important piece of public transportation infrastructure in recent memory. The amount of money spent building this road—unbelievable. It is a generator of the economy because it allows products to move. Why would you ever put land along this highway in the greenbelt? Nothing south of 407 should be in the greenbelt.

Recommendation 4: The Greenbelt Act should create a study area for all lands close to the proposed Pickering airport. Just like the Pearson airport became the single most dominant economic engine for Mississauga, Brampton and Etobicoke, so too does this airport have that potential for Durham region. It would be a huge mistake to greenbelt lands in the vicinity of the airport. Instead, you should make a special study area of it to determine how the province can get the best possible use out of these lands.

Recommendation 5: The Greenbelt Act should be amended to allow valid claims for expropriation and compensation. On October 20, Minister Gerretsen was in front of the estimates committee, and I have his questions and answers at tab 4. He was specifically asked what the government's position was on this issue, and he said that it was not his opinion that there was anybody being expropriated or that anyone's rights were being taken away. But he's on record, as I've highlighted for you, as

saying that if people believe they are being expropriated or that their rights are being taken away, they should have every right to go to court and every right to employ the Expropriations Act. Eight days later, he introduces into the Legislature Bill 135, and section 19 specifically takes away those rights—eight days later. What changed in those eight days?

Recommendation 6: The province must be bound by the Greenbelt Act. I can't understand why this act applies to all municipalities and all private individuals but does not apply to the province. I don't understand the rationale behind that. It's "Do as I say and not as I do," and that's not the way things run in Ontario.

Just in closing, I wasn't here for the presentation that Mr. Jim Robb made, but I understand that he took issue with who speaks for whom and who is funded by whom. I'm not sure, because I wasn't here, whether he disclosed where he got his funding from. I personally don't think it's important, but if this committee thinks it is, maybe they could ask him.

I also understand that there were some issues about land values in the preserve. I am intimately involved in that. I helped farmers purchase land. I know these land values. I would love to be able to submit to the province a brief on this.

The Chair: Mr. Kagan, you have one minute left.

Mr. Kagan: Thank you. Just let me conclude very quickly. I don't know if the province knows this, but the land values increased after the agricultural easements were put in place, in some cases threefold. So if anybody tells you that these agricultural easements artificially lower property value, they're lying. I have the proof: their transfers—they are registered on title—their appraisals done by the province.

Thank you very much for an opportunity to speak.

The Chair: Thank you very much for your delegation. We appreciate your being here.

HALTON FARMERS' COALITION

The Chair: Our next delegation is the Halton Farmers' Coalition. Good afternoon and welcome. Please identify yourself and the organization you are speaking for, and when you begin, you'll have 15 minutes. I will give you a warning when you get close to the end.

Mr. Roger McMillan: Thank you. My name is Roger McMillan. I'm here today representing the Halton Farmers' Coalition on behalf of Bill Allison, who, ironically, is presenting in London, Ontario, today at the Ontario Soybean Growers on farm viability.

Although there are many issues to resolve in Bill 135, the 15 minutes allowed me today precludes space, so I will focus on three recommendations. There is no doubt that we have here a Medusian dilemma.

(1) Halton Farmers recommends strongly that lands in the proposed greenbelt area below the Niagara Escarpment plan be considered for a special study that would undertake a rigorous and comprehensive planning process to determine the most appropriate greenbelt

boundaries and the best overall land use strategy for this unique area.

(2) We recommend that no agricultural land in these fragmented urban shadow areas be put in the protected countryside designation until there is an acceptable strategy for addressing the viability concerns of the agricultural community.

(3) We are asking the members of the committee on general government, in the interest of good government and out of respect for all the people of Ontario, to send Bill 135 back to the committee for needed and mandatory further study. We respectfully suggest that this legislation goes against the democratic process and establishes a very dangerous and onerous precedent that will impact tremendously on the economic engine of Ontario, as outlined in the Places to Grow document.

1550

As farmers and citizens of Ontario, we are extremely frustrated and concerned about the methods, the basis and the motivation behind Bill 135. Farmers themselves are very competent stewards of green space, and have been for hundreds of years. Farmers are the original environmentalists. They understand how the land works and how hard it is to keep it working productively. Farmers are the ones who commit their lives through many generations to maintaining productive farms and countryside.

Many of the communities affected by this legislation will lose their ability to work in harmony with local government due to this proposed legislation. These municipalities continue to take the time to fully understand the issues and put their official plans to the test locally after comprehensive studies and input from all affected stakeholders.

We as farmers are concerned about good government, good planning and good legislation. We do not understand the necessity to rush to legislate, especially to legislate with no appeal. We respectfully suggest that this goes against, as I said, the democratic process and establishes a very dangerous and onerous precedent that will burden future generations.

The Niagara Escarpment took almost 12 years of consultation before any legislation was presented. The government has not taken the time necessary to fully explore the issues and consequences of this bill on the lives and values of the people of Ontario most affected—and I would suggest that's pretty much all of them—as well as on a block of land that is many times larger and infinitely more diverse than the Niagara Escarpment, with all due respect. This bill has been hastily devised as a one-size-fits-all approach to an issue that is extremely complex. We are respectfully asking this committee, in the interest of good government and out of respect for the people of Ontario, to send this bill back to committee.

The architects of this bill by their own admission have not considered the uniqueness of the various areas encompassed by its boundaries. Indeed they have not been able to demonstrate the science behind the boundaries. These boundaries are too arbitrary and definitely lack science in their construction.

For example, on map 74—that would be in quadrant 2 in your handout—I have taken a crayon to the official boundary map. It doesn't look much different than the other crayon marks on here. If you take a look at the big black line that bisects quadrant 2, which, if you remember your algebra, is the one in the northwest corner, the natural boundary looks to me very much like the CN railway track that bisects several farms. If you follow that all the way through—and it's not on this map but it actually drops down—there's a hydro right-of-way. So I don't understand where the science is here. You're cutting people's farms in half. Half their farm is considered non-greenbelt; half is greenbelt. I don't know how CN Rail feels about part of their land being greenbelted. If it is greenbelted, it would preclude the train from going through there, I would assume, because there are restricted line uses on that. I'm not the planner by any means.

It does demonstrate, by these examples and the many examples we've heard over the past few days, that this legislation may have been rushed. Many of these properties already have protection through the Niagara Escarpment Commission and the Halton Region Conservation Authority, as well as through municipal official plans. What is the logic of imposing yet again another layer of legislation? It will only result in a greater fragmentation of land. People will lose pride of ownership and they will be less motivated to keep it green. It is only human nature. Instead of a greenbelt, you will have encouraged a brown belt of land that has been left unproductive and fallow, and that will be a tragedy for future generations.

To be sure, this is a very difficult piece of legislation. It's a very difficult position for the government to be in. You have to put your own feelings and respective party feelings aside and determine if this legislation, moving forward, is good legislation or if it needs more work. It is our fervent hope that your wisdom, deep down in your heart, will determine that Bill 135 does indeed need more work.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity.

The Chair: You've allowed two and a half minutes for each party to ask questions, beginning with the official opposition.

Mrs. Munro: Thank you very much for being here today and bringing your perspective. As I look at this map, obviously the drawing of the line certainly illustrates the kinds of things that people have indicated to us in the hearings. The question of science is one that has been given a lot of attention—frankly, the lack thereof. As I was looking at this, I was thinking about what the implications of this are for those landowners. It seems to me that it's not a very good future when you're looking at this without an appeal process. We have heard others, but in this particular case, I think it's a demonstration of potentially very dire results for those people who find themselves in this position. Is that true?

Mr. McMillan: I'm not sure I understood the question.

Mrs. Munro: The dire results of having one's land bisected this way. There is a lack of an appeal process.

Mr. McMillan: It makes no sense to bisect anybody's land and have half or a third of his land zoned one way and the other two thirds or half zoned another. That's stupid. I'm sorry, Madam Chair, but that just doesn't seem to make any sense to anybody. My seven-year-old grandson can figure that out—who, by the way, I hope to leave the farm to.

The Chair: You have another minute, if you want to use it.

Mr. Hudak: Thank you very much for an excellent presentation. As I think has been mentioned, the MacIsaac task force, the Greenbelt Task Force, recommended an appellate tribunal, I would suggest, for cases where you bring up questions of designation and boundaries. What would be a fair process for making sure it's transparent and that the issues you bring up can be addressed to your satisfaction?

Mr. McMillan: I think the fair process would be to recognize that there are issues in this legislation that are unfair, inequitable, unjust, morally inappropriate, and it is not fair. I know that "fairness" is a pretty stupid word to use these days, but it's not fair to encumber people, to rush to try to prove their own property rights to the government. I think it's backwards. The reverse should be true. The government should allow time for all the stakeholders, even if they have to speak to every farmer who is involved in the border.

Ms. Churley: Thank you very much for your presentation. There was a report released just a couple of days ago by Stats Canada about Canada. It said that Ontario was the worst in terms of valuable farmland being eaten up and developed and that something had to be done. Given your opinion about this particular piece of legislation, what in your opinion needs to be done? On the one hand, there are issues around private property and people's retirement funds disappearing and all that kind of stuff, but on the other hand, I heard time and time again yesterday from farmers, those for and against, that they want to preserve valuable farmland and that there is a real concern about the disappearance of that land. I know we just have a short time, but what would you suggest be done?

Mr. McMillan: There are a couple of things that can be done. First and foremost—and this isn't a provincial issue but it might be—is the respect for private property. That currently does not exist in this legislation. The second one is to establish local tribunals where representation can be made to a bipartisan—well, I guess municipalities aren't political; you would have known that today, but they—

Ms. Churley: You must be a comedian in your spare time.

1600

Mr. McMillan: Statistics are an important thing. I remember listening to Professor Stanaland on Ronald Reagan's trickle-down economics. He was a dean of economics at one of the universities in the States. He said

if you stand with one foot in a vat of liquid nitrogen and another foot in a burning ember fire, on average, you're going to be comfortable. That's the problem with statistics. You have to bear down on how this bill affects the individual rights of the people.

Ms. Churley: But when it comes to private property rights, how do you reconcile the fact that a lot of the land was being bought up by developers to develop on prime farmland? How do you reconcile that?

Mr. McMillan: It's a very difficult job, there's no question about it. By the same token, if they own the land, they have to go by the rules. The municipalities and cities have it within themselves and their official plans to adopt those rules and manage them. If you take a look at the boundary right now, it's strange how sometimes the boundary goes very smoothly. It follows natural contours—let's assume that the CN railway is a natural contour for the time being—and then it goes to the other side of it and all of a sudden the boundaries start taking these little steps. I'm sure that if you did—and we have done—the research on who owns that land, you'd be very surprised and it would be a very difficult political question to respond to.

Mrs. Van Bommel: Thank you for your presentation. This morning we had a farmer speak to us, a Ms. Moore, and in her presentation she said, "Over the last 10 years, most of the agricultural grants were not offered in our area, as we live in the GTA and the government did not want to invest in farmland that would soon be urban." Is that the case in Halton as well? Did you not get the advantage of having government support?

Mr. McMillan: No, I haven't, and I don't think many of my neighbours have either.

Mrs. Van Bommel: So in other words, you were not treated equally with other farmers in this province?

Mr. McMillan: I don't know the answer to that question, I'm sorry. I'm a new farmer. I bought my farm five years ago because I got tired of living in the city and I bought my own piece of green space. But I don't like people telling me what I can and can't do with it. That goes against my private rights, and I will fight to the death to make sure that doesn't happen.

Mrs. Van Bommel: I didn't get an opportunity to ask Mr. Stull that question, if that was his experience as well. When I hear that, what I get a sense of is that the farmers in this area have been set up to become reliant on selling their farms to a developer in order to cover the finance issues. I think that's a sad comment on what the government of that day did to the farmers in the GTA.

Mr. McMillan: I think you have to ask your own Minister of Agriculture if there's a solution to that, because I believe, in the last Better Farming magazine—and if I may quote him?

Mrs. Van Bommel: Yes, certainly. I just quoted another presenter.

Mr. McMillan: "We need to make sure that we work with agriculture to protect agricultural interests," says agriculture minister Steven Peters. "Top priorities on the

province's list of items to address are land severances, minimum distance separation and trespassing."

It actually doesn't speak to your question, I apologize for that. But in the article, he talks about making farms viable.

Mrs. Van Bommel: Absolutely, because it's not just a problem—as you said, a colleague of yours is speaking to the soybean growers on that very issue, because it's not just a provincial issue, it's a national issue. We have liability issues all across Canada for farmers. I just find it really sad that I as a farmer had the opportunity to take advantage of certain programs that you as a farmer in the GTA didn't. I don't think that is really a level playing field.

Mr. McMillan: Like I said, I'm new. Maybe I didn't know about it, but I'm going to look into it.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. McMillan. We appreciate your coming out today. Thank you for your delegation.

KLEINBURG AND AREA RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

The Chair: The next group we will be hearing from is the Kleinburg and Area Ratepayers Association. Good afternoon and welcome.

Mr. Ian Craig: Good afternoon.

The Chair: If you could identify yourself and the group you are speaking for today; when you do begin, you'll have 15 minutes. Should you use all your time, there won't be an opportunity for us to ask questions, but I will give you a notification if you get close to the end.

Mr. Craig: My name is Ian Craig. I'm on the board of directors for the Kleinburg and Area Ratepayers Association, and I'll refer to them as KARA from now on. I'm also going to speak on behalf of—

The Chair: Mr. Craig, can I just get you to stop until the room clears. It's not fair for you to be trying to speak over the bustle of people coming and going.

Mr. Craig: I thought you were going to tell me I was too loud.

The Chair: OK, you've got the floor now. Go ahead.

Mr. Craig: Thank you. I'm also going to speak on behalf of the Pinewood Estates Ratepayers Association, located at the southeast corner of Boyd Park. I'm also going to speak on behalf of the Purpleville Ratepayers Association. Yes, there is such a thing, and they are located, not surprisingly, in Purpleville, which is at the intersection of Teston Road and Pine Valley Drive. You may see that on the crude map that I handed out to you.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak about Bill 135. KARA would like to applaud the Dalton McGuinty government for tackling this incredible task, a task that must be completed in order to maintain any real sense of green space in the GTA and the other areas identified in the greenbelt draft plan.

Permit me to give you some quick background information about Kleinburg and the city of Vaughan. Kleinburg was a rural village located just north of Woodbridge and south of Bolton. The main branch of the

Humber River flows past Kleinburg on the west, and the east branch of the Humber flows past Kleinburg on the east. In the last decade, Kleinburg has struggled with the transition from a village to a semi-urban area. The impact of urban sprawl in Kleinburg has been quite dramatic and very distressing to the long-time residents in particular. Perhaps the most alarming consequence of urban sprawl in the area and the area north of Kleinburg is the increase in traffic. Huge numbers of commuters cut through Kleinburg en route to Highway 400 south. We're also very concerned about the ongoing loss of farmland, wetlands, bush lots, open space and tableland in the immediate area.

Just east of Kleinburg, the city of Vaughan is moving ahead with urban village 1 and urban village 2. Now, quite frankly, I consider that a Vaughan oxymoron: "urban" and "village." In other words, with 115,000 people moving into these two villages, the City Above Toronto is actually building two more cities. The city of Vaughan has planned an extremely large employment zone, an industrial park, if you will, several kilometres west of Kleinburg. This will increase traffic, noise and pollution in the area.

These subdivisions are being built north of Kleinburg, and the land to the south is already built up tight to Kleinburg's southern limit. You can see what's happening: We're being surrounded. So now we're basically circling the wagons, so to speak, and asking you to protect the small amount of natural environment that is left.

The city of Vaughan has one very large and significant resource. It's not the new mall, Vaughan Mills, it's not Canada's Wonderland and it's not even the McMichael art collection; it's a 12-kilometre stretch of the East Humber River, valley land, essentially, running south from the King-Vaughan town line through Kleinburg to Woodbridge. The area south of Kleinburg is known as the William Granger Greenway. This greenway, I believe, is the last remaining stretch of the East Humber, mostly in public hands, managed by the TRCA, where you can still get a sense of the rich land that First Nations people lived on for centuries and the land that our first settlers encountered. Little wonder that the East Humber River, with its cold streams, pine forests and diversity of wildlife, is a vital part of the Humber River, a heritage river, I might add. Some of the species in the area are endangered. There's a very thorough inventory in the handout that the Friends of Boyd Park gave to you on Monday. A similar lengthy list of the species could be compiled as we move north in the East Humber River valley toward King City. I hope that you can find some time—and I'm sure you have a volume of material to go through—to take a second look at the particular handout, because it does mention the three areas that I'm going to talk about right now.

So this afternoon I would like you to consider adding three more pieces to the greenbelt map. I handed out a map, and the area that I've identified as area 1 is north of Teston Road and west of Highway 400. This area is just

south of the Oak Ridges moraine. South of that area, the land has been levelled, trees have been removed and row upon row of similar houses on small lots will be completed next year, adding to the traffic on Highway 400 and, to some extent, adding to Kleinburg's traffic woes. People will drive from this area west on Teston Road, which will be a two-lane road as you head into Kleinburg and head toward Highway 427 and points west.

1610

The area that we would like you to put into the greenbelt is an area that drains into two major feeder streams for the East Humber River, namely Purpleville Creek and Cold Creek. These are recognized provincially for their importance in supporting the redbelt dace, a small fish that is on the provincially threatened list. If we can't, by the way, protect those headwaters of the East Humber, then I wonder what we can protect. Somebody asked me if I'd ever seen a redbelt dace, and the answer is, yes, I have, but I couldn't actually identify it. They move very quickly. They know they're endangered; they're very quick.

This land in area 1 has farms, although they're not farmed by the original farmers. They're held in many cases by speculators. There are bush lots and there are wetlands. At the present time, this land is not zoned for housing. However, we feel it's just a matter of time before the city of Vaughan rezones the area and we see another massive development. The headwaters of the East Humber River must be protected in order to maintain a healthy river system. We do not believe that the city of Vaughan needs this land now or in the next 20 years. Surely there have to be limits to growth.

I suppose there are three key questions regarding this large area. I'm just estimating, from looking at a topographical map, but I think we're dealing here with about 900 hectares or, if you'd like, 2,500 acres. Why is the area not in the greenbelt? Who owns or holds this land? If it's not part of an official plan, and I don't believe it is, then why can't it be an easy addition to the greenbelt?

The second piece of land is north of Teston Road and west of Kipling Avenue. It's number 2 on the map. This is an area of wetlands, farmland and bush lots. It's essentially the tableland for the East Humber River just north of Kleinburg. I believe that much of this 200-hectare or 500-acre parcel of property is owned by a Mr. Schickedanz, a well-known GTA developer. A hydro right-of-way runs through the property and so does a gas pipeline. Several years ago, there was a fairly large explosion of that gas pipeline right at the river. It levelled quite a large area.

Here again, Kleinburg does not need nor want to see another housing development. While I'm an avid golfer, we don't need another golf course. A housing development here would undoubtedly add to the traffic chaos in Kleinburg. Roads in the area are narrow and hilly. They're hazardous at the best of times without adding more traffic.

On the opposite side of the East Humber from area 2 is a subdivision and a golf course. This course, Copper

Creek, ignored the pleas from TRCA to stay out of environmentally significant areas. However, an OMB hearing allowed them to go ahead.

Tableland is necessary for wildlife that live in the area. Birds and animals do move back and forth from the valley to the adjacent tableland. In fact, foxes, raccoons and coyotes have been seen in downtown Kleinburg; a little shopping and then off into the valley. If you recall your high school biology, you'll know that the food chain can easily be disturbed if larger birds and animals lose their habitat. Failing to protect tableland is the first step to creating a wasteland. I think it took about 20 years for the Save the Rouge advocates to convince everyone that a river can only survive if the adjacent tablelands are left in a natural state. It's section 5.4.1 in the draft plan that talks about a 60-metre buffer. I think it's a little vague in several sections. There are parts of the East Humber River where much more than a 60-metre buffer will be required.

The science, as they say—and I know that you've been hearing this for the last few days—has been done in several cases. The TRCA has an amazing staff made up of qualified and dedicated people who have done the research. Take their work. Much of it can be found in these two documents. You may have seen these before. One of them is called Legacy: A Strategy for a Healthy Humber, and the other one is called A Call to Action. They were done in 1997. They're in the process of redoing them. I know that the TRCA can update you on any of the areas that we're talking about. Here, again, why was this area left out of the greenbelt plan?

The third piece of land that KARA would like to see in the greenbelt—and I know that you've heard about this several times during the past week—is Boyd Park. Just south of Boyd Park, the historic Carrying-Place Trail managed to split into two parts, and these trails essentially went around what is now Boyd Park to avoid wetlands and deep valleys and the dense undercover. Come for a walk in this special place and find out for yourself. In fact, I'd be glad to take you on a walk through the area. The park is Vaughan's answer to Rouge Park. It's our High Park. It's our Stanley Park.

When Dr. Boyd sold 255 acres of land to the Humber Valley Conservation Authority in the mid-1950s, he did so at a price far below market value. He sold the property with the understanding that it would be kept for people to enjoy and that the precious natural environment would be protected. Today there are only 155 acres of that park left. They've lost 100 acres.

Pierre Berton came to a barbecue in Boyd Park sponsored by the Friends of Boyd Park this past September. In fact, it was Pierre's last public, outside function. He said to the crowd, "Get mad as hell if developers are allowed to continue to peck away at this park." So I'm here this afternoon, on KARA's behalf, to ask you to put Boyd Park into the greenbelt.

The pine forest on the east side of Boyd Conservation Area is the heart of the East Humber River Valley. If this area is part of the greenbelt, it will see some of the

protection that it so desperately needs. There are many compelling reasons to add this to the greenbelt map.

There are, at this point, no explanations for leaving these three areas out.

I was here on Monday when you heard the presentations from the Friends of Boyd Park. It was clear that there was consensus around this table, from all parties, that the Boyd Conservation Area should be put into the greenbelt.

I used to say to my students who were struggling with exams and tests, "Do what's easy first of all. Get off to a positive start." Putting the areas that I have talked about this afternoon into the greenbelt is easy. The science has been done.

I urge you to look closely at this wonderful opportunity that both sides of the House have to work together for the people in York region and put these three areas into the greenbelt map. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. It was easy to listen to you. We only have a minute left for each party to ask a question. I'm going to be beginning with Ms. Churley.

Ms. Churley: Only a minute. Thank you for your presentation. You ended by saying that you're not sure why these areas and Boyd Park have been left out. What reason have you been given? Your organization must have asked.

Mr. Craig: We certainly have asked. The answer for Boyd Park was that it was in an urban area and it was south of Rutherford Road, yet when I look at the map in your plan, I look over to the Rouge, and, boy, that's in an urban area.

Ms. Churley: It doesn't make any sense. Who's your MPP?

Mr. Craig: Greg Sorbara.

Ms. Churley: Have you spoken to him directly about why it has been left out?

Mr. Craig: I haven't, but people in the Friends of Boyd Park have. I do believe that he was rather evasive with his answer.

Ms. Churley: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Mr. Rinaldi, on the government side.

Mr. Rinaldi: Thanks very much, Mr. Craig, for coming down and sharing your concerns. I'll just make a statement that I've made before, and I'll make it again. I think one needs to understand that Bill 135 is enabling legislation for governments to establish greenbelt areas. The concerns you've brought forward are really about boundaries, and those boundaries are really in the draft stage at the present time. Obviously, the input that we're getting here at these hearings is certainly something that, as a government, we're going to consider. So I certainly appreciate your thoughts.

Mr. Craig: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Hudak, from the official opposition.

1620

Mr. Hudak: Thank you, sir, for the presentation. I share the suspicions of my colleague Ms. Churley—and I assume that Mrs. Munro feels the same way—that something funny is going on in Vaughan–King–Aurora. There

seems to be a lot of good evidence to include these areas in the greenbelt plan, but they've been excluded, and that's why we say a lot of political science has gone into this instead of environmental science.

Chair, I'd like to move a motion that Boyd Conservation Area be included in the greenbelt plan, that the committee recommends to the minister that Boyd Conservation Area be included in the greenbelt plan.

The Chair: Can you put it in writing, please?

Mr. Hudak: You bet.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Craig, for your delegation. I appreciate your being here today.

Mr. Craig: Thank you.

Mrs. Van Bommel: On a point of order, Madam Chair: This impacts on the draft plan; it doesn't really impact on the bill that we are discussing in this committee.

Mr. Hudak: Why not vote against it? I mean, if you don't support—well, we've heard from groups over and over again. Simply vote against the motion. I think it's a test to see if the members will put their money where their mouth is, so to speak, and we're prepared to support this motion.

The Chair: So I'm opening debate on the motion. Would there be anybody else who would like to speak on the motion while we get a copy of it so that you can see what you're voting on?

Ms. Churley: Well, I have to confess, I put him up to that, because I had thought of doing it, and my time ran out. I'm concerned about a lot of areas that have been left out, but this one has been really bugging me, because when you look at the map and whose riding it is, and because we cannot get any straight answers—and talk about scientific evidence on this one.

I believe anybody who agrees or disagrees with the science would say that the scientific evidence is there that this should be included. So I certainly will be seconding the resolution and ask that all people support it so we can come out of this today united in preserving this very important natural feature.

Mrs. Van Bommel: First of all, as I said earlier, this is part of the draft plan, and all these kinds of things, such as the Boyd Park, are under consideration as part of that particular thing. So, therefore, I would like the Chair to rule on whether this particular motion is out of order, because it does not relate to the act, the enabling legislation that we are discussing here.

The Chair: Having not gotten the motion in my hand, I can't really rule it out of order. So I think what is happening is a request for us to consider putting this in the plan, having not seen the motion. Have I got that right, Mr. Hudak?

Mr. Hudak: Well, Chair, just to be clear, I'm simply requesting, through our motion, that the committee request that the minister include Boyd conservation park in the greenbelt plan. It's a simple motion, and I've not heard any arguments to the contrary. If the government members are prepared to make arguments to the contrary, I'd enjoy hearing them for the sake of debate, but I do

regret that they're trying to hide behind procedural challenges. Just answer the question.

The Chair: So your wording will say, "The committee request the minister consider"?

Mr. Hudak: I don't know if it has "consider."

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Tonia Grannum): "Ask the minister to include...."

The Chair: "The committee request the minister include Boyd Park"?

Mr. Hudak: Boyd Conservation Area.

The Chair: All right. I don't believe that is out of order. I'm going to rule that it isn't out of order. Mrs. Van Bommel, did you want to finish your thought on that one?

Mrs. Van Bommel: Well, then, at this point, if we're going to debate this thing, personally, I have real concerns about the committee as a body giving preferential treatment to anyone, because we have heard so many different situations where people have asked us to deal with specific properties, parks and such. We've heard this all through the last four days. To start giving preferential treatment to one, I have difficulty with.

I think I want to look at all of them very closely and decide on the merits of doing—and as a committee, like I said, this is really an issue of the draft plan. If we were to do that, we would have to look at the entire thing, and I don't think that that's the role of this committee at this point. The committee is here to look at the enabling legislation, Bill 135.

Mrs. Munro: I think the important thing here is that the committee has the power to move a motion. That's what we're asking for. I think, too, given that we have heard about this particular piece of land through more than one submission—and it is publicly owned land; I think that's an important point to make—that others have come forward, as the parliamentary assistant has referred to, various other questions of what should be in or what should be out.

In this particular case, we're looking at a block of publicly owned land. The presentations that we have been given clearly demonstrate this as an anomaly. I think we do have the power to consider this motion.

Mr. Rinaldi: Just a comment: If we deal with Boyd Park in isolation, I really feel somewhat that—when we talk about Mrs. Munro's argument that we've heard about this particular property more than once, a couple of times, she's quite right. But I can tell you, I've heard a lot more about farmlands in the last three days.

Interjection.

Mr. Rinaldi: I do have the floor, I believe.

I think we've heard in just the last couple of presentations that private property rights should be treated the same as public lands. How can we make a decision today and exclude all those other submissions? I'm not prepared to vote in favour of this motion, Madam Chair.

Mrs. Munro: On a point of order, Madam Chair: I made it very clear that I was considering this motion on the basis that it was public land, because I'm very

conscious of what is private property. I just wanted to clarify that distinction for you.

Mr. Duguid: I'm just going to move that we have this particular motion dealt with when we review clause-by-clause. I think it's clear that government members are very interested in this particular issue. We've listened very carefully to the deputants. They've made some very valid points. We're actively considering this particular proposal now, and we want some time to consider it before we do a knee-jerk reaction and approve or recommend something. We want to make sure we've done all our homework before we do that.

The Chair: I appreciate your advice, but this motion is on the floor and I'm going to deal with it now.

Ms. Churley: We certainly don't want to prolong this debate too long, out of respect for our deputants who are patiently waiting to speak to us.

The argument the Liberal members are making is that a lot of groups have been coming before us to take things out. This is one case where we've heard from day one that it should never have been left out. It's non-controversial. I don't think anybody has come forward saying they think it should be left out. There's all kinds of scientific backup for why it should be in. I think we could just deal with this one swiftly, and then it's in.

Mr. Hudak: As I said, I don't want to belabour the point. I'm prepared to end debate and call the question shortly. But I think we have heard, as my colleagues have said, every speaker that's come before us, and a large number have spoken about Boyd Conservation Area. It is public land.

The only person who may be objecting from behind the scenes is the finance minister. Maybe he's pulling some strings and asking that this vote not take place. It leads me to some suspicion, since it's his riding. You've got to wonder who is behind the scheme to keep Boyd Conservation Area out of the greenbelt.

My colleagues opposite—I think there could be a fair argument that this one has had extraordinary support compared to other areas. If there are other pieces of property that you'd like to debate, then we would certainly be open to that as well.

But it would also be a symbol. With respect, what we've heard from the government members, in a very general sense, is a non-stop defence of the plan and the science. You claim it's good science; we've heard lots of reasons to dispute that, and have considerable doubts about the science behind this plan. Nonetheless, the government members have defended the science, defended the plan and defended this greenbotch scheme. So I would just enjoy seeing a few of the government members send a signal to the minister that they're not happy with all the decisions that have been made, and to pick out at least this one as a symbol that this plan can be improved.

1630

Mr. Duguid: I'm going to ask for unanimous consent from the committee to deal with this particular motion at clause-by-clause. I ask for that for a number of reasons. I

think that's the appropriate place for it to be dealt with. We do want to hear from the rest of the deputants before we move forward to clause-by-clause. We want to make sure that we have ample opportunity to move similar motions when we're coming through clause-by-clause, if in fact we think they're appropriate.

On top of that, we know that prior to Christmas the Tory side seemed like they were totally in favour of this particular legislation. They seemed to have changed their minds over Christmas and I'd hate to think of what might happen if their change their minds again between now and clause-by-clause, so I want to give them time, while we get to clause-by-clause, to consider their position because they may well want to flip-flop on it again.

The Chair: Do we have unanimous consent?

Mr. Hudak: No.

The Chair: Ms. Churley, you have the floor next.

Ms. Churley: I would like to call the question.

The Chair: OK. I don't believe there is anybody else who is listed who asked to speak.

Ms. Churley: A recorded vote.

The Chair: A recorded vote has been requested.

Mr. Hudak, I've just changed one word in your motion. You said "ask" and then you said "request" afterwards. "That the committee ask the minister" or "That the committee request the minister"?

Mr. Hudak: Chair, whatever wording makes more sense to you: "ask" or "request."

The Chair: You used both, so I was trying to find the words you were happy—

Mr. Hudak: Then stick to the original.

The Chair: OK. The motion is: That the committee ask the minister to include Boyd Conservation Area in the greenbelt plan.

Ayes

Churley, Hudak, Munro.

Nays

Duguid, Lalonde, Rinaldi, Van Bommel.

The Chair: That motion is lost.

ONTARIO PROPERTY AND ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS ALLIANCE

The Chair: Our next delegation is the Ontario Property and Environmental Rights Alliance. Welcome. Thank you for your patience. If you could identify who will be speaking today, when you do begin speaking you have 15 minutes. I will give you a warning when your time gets close to the end.

Mr. Bob Fowler: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Bob Fowler. I am the unpaid secretary of the Ontario Property and Environmental Rights Alliance, or OPERA, in shorthand.

On behalf of our member organizations and individual supporters, I want to express sincere thanks for this opportunity to confirm the views of our coalition with respect to the proposed Golden Horseshoe greenbelt. Our submission today is divided between a condensed summary of the OPERA position relative to the greenbelt concept and an equally brief outline of specific recommendations addressed to the possibility of its legislative enactment. To save time and conceal my own lack of expertise as a public speaker, I'll read the first part, and one of our members, a professional agrologist, Dr. James White, will deliver the second part. It's hoped this arrangement will accommodate the 15 minutes allotted to us for this presentation with some residual time for questions and answers. We have, as requested, filed copies of our remarks today with your clerk for later review by all committee members.

OPERA is fundamentally opposed to the concept, principles and unilateral application of greenbelt legislation on the following grounds:

(1) Arbitrary transfer to state control of almost two million acres of land, almost all of it privately owned, represents a massive redistribution of wealth. Statutory devaluation of property by what amounts to a government lien will increase market value of lands adjacent to, but conveniently outside, the greenbelt at the expense of those inside it.

(2) Stripped of its ostensibly noble purpose and flowing rhetoric, we see the greenbelt proposal as yet another exercise in government expropriation of private property without compensation, a perception that is reinforced by the haste in which the whole enterprise is being introduced on the promise, but never the production, of impartially prepared and independently developed science to support it.

(3) Individual landowners targeted for greenbelting were not given prior notice. Queen's Park bureaucrats and their paid consultants instead provided invitation-only workshops and narrowly advertised public meetings. Few affected landowners were aware of, and fewer still attended, these contrived meetings, most of which were dominated by government-supported professional lobby groups.

(4) The proposal cites increased urban sprawl, loss of viable agricultural land, environmental degradation and future immigration/population densities as justification for legislated manipulation of private property rights, uses, title, collateral worth and market value. In fact, the proposed greenbelt is a remedy politically and cosmetically useful in treating the effects of these problems while clearly ignoring their entrenched causes.

(5) Like most land planning initiated by senior government, the greenbelt proposal assumes that citizen rights and natural justice are subordinate to the so-called public good and that relevant legislation need not include draconian regulations and plans designed to ensure its compliance. We suspect these critical details will, as usual, be introduced and quietly enacted months or years after public attention has eroded.

Now I will introduce Dr. White, who has specific recommendations along these lines. Thank you.

Dr. James White: Thank you. My first recommendation involves the concept of compensation. We recognize that the provincial government has cleverly written Bill 135 to differentiate between the taking of uses from the taking of possession, thus allowing it to claim that compensation is not appropriate. This legal sleight of hand ignores the moral imperative of fairness. While devaluing private property by statute may be legal, it is not right, ethical or justified.

We recommend, as have others, that a commission be established to monitor property values. But we suggest using 2003 as the base period, because it is my observation that land values of some farms in the greenbelt have already depreciated.

We also have a concern for those who need a compassionate compensation program, which would be established to immediately purchase lands of those individuals of retirement age who can no longer sell their properties at reasonable or recent prices because of the greenbelt designation. At the task force and at the plan review hearings we heard many cases of individuals and their children citing this as a major problem and people being left in a great state of limbo.

Many landowners, especially those in the Niagara Escarpment plan area, and I suspect the Oak Ridges moraine, don't know that their land is also in the greenbelt. No plan review or task force meetings were held north of Highway 9, despite written requests by one of our member organizations. We believe that all landowners in the greenbelt should be and deserve to be notified by the province within one month of passing of this bill.

Implementation: We believe the planning process has been too short. I lived through the finalization of the Niagara Escarpment plan, which required 12 years. Many iterations occurred and we had many improvements in that plan. We suggest a period of at least two years to allow all those impacted to be notified, informed and to provide real feedback based on discussion, not contrived meetings by invitation designed to create the illusion of consensus where none exists. We believe that all owners should have the opportunity to challenge the boundaries and whether they're in or out, and we've just heard a discussion of that issue.

1640

We want to see the regulations and final plan details, not just permissive legislation. Frankly, we're very afraid that many additional land use restrictions will be added and there will be no opportunity to comment on them or explain why they are counterproductive. We are aware that additional controls are already planned and being discussed by the Niagara Escarpment plan area, but we have not been apprised of their intent, application or impacts.

The objectives: The proposed greenbelt legislation will not protect agricultural land unless it protects farmers. It will not provide urbanites with large green

parks. This is one of the assumptions I keep reading in the Toronto press. We support the recommendations of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture regarding these issues. The greenbelt is not going to provide all the wonderful promised environmental benefits because almost all of the lands involved are privately owned and will still be privately owned after this bill is passed. Trespassers, frankly, will not be welcome.

The focus of the proposal: We believe the urban sprawl results from centralized industrial, commercial and housing activity. Loss of agricultural land is a product of substandard returns in the business of farming and the continuing expansion of the urban area. Environmental degradation is accelerated by too many people sharing the same space. If growing immigration and population densities are the problem, as is suggested in the introduction to this plan, then we have some recommendations for the government:

First, address the issue directly by encouraging decentralization of industrial, commercial and resulting residential activities to outside of the GTA.

Second, follow the lead of the Quebec government in taking control of immigration and requiring new arrivals to initially locate in less populated areas of Ontario.

Third, encourage industries to locate outside the GTA by providing them with tax incentives.

Fourth, support development intensification within the urban envelope by allowing developers increased densities and cleaning up a bunch of the brownfields.

Finally, stop trying to solve urban problems by load-regulating on rural areas, which did not create the problems. Solve the problems where they exist. Most municipalities have adequate official plans which are vastly superior to greenbelt legislation because they were developed by local people who understand their community needs. In any case, the Planning Act allows the provincial government to override policies they believe are inappropriate.

This completes the OPERA submission to the standing committee. We appreciate your kind and patient attention. If, at the end of the long day of committee deliberations, there are any questions concerning our remarks we will try to answer them now. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. You've left about a minute and a quarter for each party, beginning with Mr. Duguid.

Mr. Duguid: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'm not sure if I'll be able to get a response to this question by the time I get through it. There are a number of points you raised in here I take some exception to. They insinuate that there's some kind of expropriation going on here. I'm not aware of any expropriation. In fact, there is no expropriation happening anywhere here. There's a mention of taking uses away from people. I have no evidence, and have seen no evidence, of any specific case anywhere in the greenbelt where somebody who has particular rights to uses now on their property will not still be entitled to those rights after the greenbelt.

There's a suggestion that for some reason some people weren't informed or didn't know about the greenbelt and

that the consultations were by invitation only and the workshops were narrowly advertised; (a) that's not accurate and (b) we had 4,600 people participate in those workshops and consultations. When the previous government was consulting on the Oak Ridges moraine and the Niagara Escarpment act, there were none. I find it interesting that these would be in here.

I guess my question to you is, when the Oak Ridges moraine act was being considered, did you make deputations there as well, with the same concerns?

Mr. Fowler: No, we did not.

Mr. Duguid: Thank you.

Dr. White: Our member associations are not located in the Oak Ridges moraine.

The Chair: The official opposition, Mr. Hudak.

Mr. Hudak: I guess the parliamentary assistant fancies himself a lawyer attacking the witnesses, rather than asking questions of substance to their presentations.

Dr. White: You've got it right.

Mr. Hudak: You agree with me, which is too bad, because initially, it seemed that the government members were at least listening to the presentations in the first couple of days, but are getting more pessimistic, as today we've heard—

The Chair: Can you ask your question of the deputants, please?

Mr. Hudak: The deputants think I'm right with my observation. Today we've heard them attack a number of groups, questioning why they're here, rather than commenting on the merits of their proposals.

On October 20, at the estimates committee, Mr. Gerretsen, the minister, replied to me with respect to expropriation: "If we are, then those rights should be compensated for, going through the normal process, if somebody's of that opinion. They can go through the courts and through whatever other methods are available under the Expropriations Act." But in the act, they remove access to the expropriations. That was only eight days later. Do you think the minister lied to me?

Mr. Fowler: Let's say he handled the truth with a certain amount of inattention. The fact is that this legislation does not provide any appeal process at all. Whether there's expropriation possible or not, there is no appeal. It seems to me that that means that there is no expropriation permitted, even as a discussion.

Speaking personally, I do not agree that this act does not expropriate use, collateral worth, and market value of private property. I hope some of the members of this committee someday will own rural property and go to a bank and try to borrow some money on a piece of property on which there's a government lien. I would think that they would not be very enthusiastically received.

The Chair: Ms. Churley, would you like the remaining time? You have just over a minute.

Ms. Churley: Thank you very much for your submission. I don't have any questions.

The Chair: Thank you very much, gentlemen. We appreciate your coming out.

MERRYBROOK FARM

The Chair: Our next deputant is Merrybrook Farm. Could you introduce yourself for Hansard, and the group that you're representing. When you do begin, you will have 15 minutes, and I will try and give you a warning, should you get close to the end.

Mr. Bob Merry: Good afternoon. I'd like to introduce my wife, Mary. I am Bob Merry and I own 250 acres in south Halton Hills, lots 6 and 7, concession 4. I am a pork, beef and crop farmer. For the past 37 years, I have been dependent upon my farming income, with no other source of income. I have lived on Merrybrook Farm for 50 years. I am not a speculator. I believe that you will agree that farm income in the products that I produce has not been excessive. In fact, I often refer to it as cheap food policy, one that our governments support, but now I feel that your greenbelt legislation will also mean that the consumer is going to get free land too.

I have been active on many farm committees, such as Ontario Pork, the cattlemen's association, the OFA, the Farm Safety Association, Ontario Soil and Crop, and the Halton agricultural advisory board, to name a few. I have attended numerous meetings over the years with Halton region planners, and I've always seen lots of green space allowed in the official plan. I am not against green space being designated into long-term plans for the province. I've protected my farm as a green space for all my years of farming. I've spoken out against urban development into our agricultural lands. I even went to the OMB myself to argue against an estate subdivision over the fence from my farm, but it fell on deaf ears. Farmers have never been listened to, and the houses and industries are all around me now. You're closing the gate after the cows are out.

1650

There are 13 acres of land only two kilometres away from my farm that have just sold for \$500,000 an acre. Do you really think that greenbelting land so close to development will not affect the value of my land? Who will be interested in buying a farm like mine? It takes money to keep our lands and buildings maintained, and we're not making it in farming. A recent quote I just received for painting my barns and sheds was over \$20,000. They'll rot before I could ever justify that kind of expense. Maintaining these beautiful country properties and homes costs a lot of money in the GTA. Prices seem to double down there where we are compared to other rural areas in the province. Hobby farmers may eventually purchase a property like mine, but they haven't given us any evidence in the past that they will continue to produce the quantity of food that is needed to feed Ontario. They typically set up horse farms, but these farms don't feed people. If they do try to crop the land, I suspect you will find that a good businessman doesn't keep putting good money after bad. Then we will be left with a wasteland of neglected farmland.

There are inequities in farm income in Ontario, as I'm sure you are aware. The chicken and dairy producers

have their quotas, closed borders and cost-of-production formulas. They are on a different playing field from the rest of us, who contend with free trade and world prices. I have no problem with what I chose to produce, but I continued with a lower farm income, always thinking that I had valuable equity in my land. I believe you are negatively affecting my family's future with the devaluation caused by the greenbelt designation. Another thought: It is often seen that a farmer who sells his land for development just moves over to another "real" farming community to set up again. It takes millions of dollars to do that. Don't keep me tied to property that has lost its farming future in the community.

Merrybrook Farm is two minutes up the road from the Toronto Auto Auction, an enormous business that frequently moves thousands of cars a day on our road. Traffic is unusually heavy in our farming area. Cars use our road to bypass the local highways, heading to Highway 401. When the 401 is closed for an accident, which happens weekly now, the traffic is re-routed right past our farm. That's approximately 2,000 cars an hour. We can't safely operate our machinery on the roads during the daily morning and evening rush hours. When we're travelling on 5 Side Road with loads of hay, transport trucks pass me halfway up the hill. We can't farm in this.

There are more than 25 non-farm residences that have been allowed to be built around my farm. The folks in the \$800,000 home immediately south of my farm have very sensitive noses. Someone phoned me once and said—they were nice about it—"Could you please make sure you don't spread this weekend? I'm trying to sell my house." We can't farm there. The MDS formula would never allow us to build an updated barn five times the size of my present barn to house the number of animals I need to have a viable hog operation. Neighbours complain when I spread manure. They don't like me to spray my crops near their houses. No real farmer is going to buy my farm with these restrictions. Family farms are history. It's big business now.

We have no farming infrastructure in our community. Local farm suppliers are long gone due to lack of business. Local farm support and lobby groups are dying in numbers due to the lack of bona fide farmers.

It seems to me that the only delegation that will be negatively affected by the greenbelt is the farmers of Ontario. After hearing the minister in his speech on Monday about how everyone will benefit from this greenbelt, it was an interesting omission that farmers were not mentioned. The owners of the majority of land to be greenbelted weren't valued enough to be mentioned. As our Minister of Agriculture and Food seems to have been noticeably absent and not supportive through this process, it also indicates the lack of value that farmers have in the Liberal government. The people of Ontario already have the Oak Ridges moraine, the Niagara Escarpment, provincial parks, conservation areas and green spaces planned for in their regional official plans.

Farmland is plentiful enough to feed the province, thanks to continuing technology improvements and

scientific advances. We produce more food than we can eat now and take low prices because of it. Our sons are not continuing in that kind of farm business. They want to make the kind of money that urban businessmen make. That will mean large, industrial farms to do that, and I doubt if they will be environmentally friendly enough in a greenbelt space.

Many Ontarians will benefit from the preservation of this land. You have not involved us with the planning of this greenbelt protection, and we as farmers are disappointed and insulted to be so belittled. It is our land that you are giving to others to benefit from. To do so without compensation is even worse. We have done our environmental farm plans, we've planted trees, we've protected waterways, we've done nutrient management and many other programs over the years to preserve this land. We do value our land.

In closing, I want you to know that I have been a paid-up Liberal for many years, and I am very disappointed with how my party has handled this agricultural issue.

Statistics Canada released reports on January 19 that showed a 31% drop in cash farm income for Canadian farmers from 2002 to 2003. I doubt very much that the finances for 2004 will be any better. The main declines were in the beef and cash crop sectors, of course. Low grain prices, lower average yields and higher costs for fertilizer and fuel have us in a situation where it's impossible to pencil in a profit. BSE has been another major cost for myself and many farmers. It seems that your greenbelt plan is hitting us when we're already down. No wonder we're upset. We do not want to have the government regulate how our land can be marketed.

Thank you very much for listening.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Merry. We have a minute and a half for each party to ask you a question, beginning with the official opposition.

Mr Hudak: I know my colleague Ms. Munro has a question. I just want to say thanks very much, Bob. I think you've been here through the entire committee process. I appreciate how much you obviously care about this bill and getting it improved. Thank you for your presentation.

Mrs. Munro: I want to echo that sentiment. Also, I think you would agree with us that the government has failed to provide any kind of viable agricultural component to this particular bill. We are certainly pressing the government on that issue, because we think green space is a totally separate issue. What we're talking about here is people's livelihoods.

Mr. Merry: I agree. The viability is not good and hasn't been for a while. The US people are bringing their corn up here and selling it for less than we can because they're getting a subsidy down there. This is not right. It's got to be fixed, and our government is the one that has to do it. I see people nodding their heads. They know this is what's going on.

1700

Ms. Churley: Thank you very much for being so patient with us today. It's always good to hear from

farmers who are directly affected. There are a lot of questions I could ask you. I agree that it's a theme we've heard time and time again, that with or without the greenbelt there are a number of issues farmers have, that there is indeed a crisis.

You mention the family farm disappearing and the large industrial farms taking over. Can you talk a bit more about what's going on with that?

Mr. Merry: I was a pork producer until just recently, when my barn—I built my barn in 1976. It's tired now and I had to replace it, but that size isn't any longer. They probably would have let me build that size, but I didn't. I had to build a big one, and I cannot build a big barn on my property. Sorry, I missed the—

Ms. Churley: You're saying that the family farm is disappearing and all it's becoming the big industrial farms.

Mr. Merry: This is the reason. At that time, I could make up to \$40 to \$50 a hog that I shipped to market. That's a market hog. I had the mother, I raised the baby for six months, and I sent it off. I'd make up to \$50. That figure is down between \$10 and \$15 now, if you're lucky and don't have the US putting a countervail on us because they say we're dumping pork into the US. This is what's happening out there. So at \$10, I have to have a bigger barn and produce five times as many—

Ms. Churley: Thank you. I know we could go on for some time on this, but I appreciate your response.

The Chair: Thank you very much. Ms. Van Bommel, I believe, has a question.

Mrs. Van Bommel: I want to add my thanks as well. It was certainly a very moving presentation. You're saying—I'm just going to quote from your presentation—that the cows are already out of the gate. You're basically saying that in your case, in your situation, we're too late.

Mr. Merry: Yes, you're too late. You should have been with me 15 years ago when I was at the OMB trying to stop that estate development. Nobody would help me. I fought the region's lawyer. I fought the town of Milton's lawyer. No one wanted to help me. That's when this should have been done in our area, where I am. It could have been done there because there weren't a lot of houses there; there were a few, but not like there are now. It's too late.

Mrs. Van Bommel: You comment on the fact that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food hasn't been here. Actually, Mike Toombs, who is ADM—

Mr. Merry: Yes, I saw Mike here and I saw Mike at one of the—

Mrs. Van Bommel: Yes, and he was there yesterday as well. They have been attending these meetings.

I'm looking at all the things you're saying and I'm nodding my head in agreement. I know, I live just off the 402. Whenever there's an accident in my area, all the big transports and stuff come by. In the summertime, we get a lot of vacation traffic trying to get up to the lake. There are times when you just won't go out on the tractor because it's dangerous for yourself and the person who

comes flying up behind with no idea how slow you're really going. I certainly empathize with everything you're saying here. Thank you for your presentation.

Mr. Merry: Thank you very much for listening.

The Chair: Thank you very much for coming.

ONTARIO FARMLAND TRUST

The Chair: Our next delegation is the Ontario Farmland Trust. Good afternoon and welcome. I'm just going to wait till the flurry settles so you have our full attention. Could everybody please take their seat so we can begin? We're in the home stretch of our hearings. Good afternoon, gentlemen. Please identify the individual who's going to be speaking today and what organization you represent. When you begin, you will have 15 minutes, and I will give you a reminder if you get close to the end.

Dr. Stewart Hilts: I'm Stewart Hilts. I'm chair of the Ontario Farmland Trust and I teach at the University of Guelph. Don Prince, with me, is one of the vice-chairs of the farmland trust.

We are a new charity in Ontario devoted to protecting farmland for farming. On behalf of the board of the farmland trust, I'd like to thank you for this opportunity to address the committee on the greenbelt. We'd like to address our comments specifically to the role of the greenbelt in protecting farmland.

First, we echo the comments of many that the farmland in southern Ontario is unique and worth protecting, including the farmland left around the GTA. Southern Ontario, though small compared to the rest of Canada, contains over half of Canada's class 1 land, and almost all of southern Ontario south of the shield is prime agricultural soil. In addition, but less widely recognized, is the fact that southern Ontario contains all of the best two climate zones for specialized agricultural production in Canada, better than anything else anywhere in the country. We have lost 50% of the farmland of the Golden Horseshoe in the last 50 years; we certainly don't want to continue at that pace.

Why should we protect this farmland? Many people have given reasons. We would highlight three: Agriculture is still the number two economic engine of the Ontario economy; farmland provides numerous environmental and social other benefits and attractive rural communities; we do not at the moment choose to be self-sufficient in food in Ontario, but the capacity to make that choice in the future, in our view, is an important one.

We know that many conservation groups have supported the greenbelt for environmental reasons, and we're also aware that a number of farm groups, particularly the OFA, have opposed the greenbelt until compensation is provided to farm landowners. We believe the choice is not nearly so simple. There is a middle road whereby a properly designed greenbelt can provide both environmental benefits and farmland protection, but only if several key points are recognized and acted upon.

It has been said that you can protect farmland by protecting the farmer or that you can start by protecting the farmland. In our view, you have to do both at the same time. We must design a greenbelt that supports the farmer while also protecting the farmland.

I've brought seven recommendations, to be specific and as concise as we can, but I would also like to address the recommendations of the agricultural advisory team, of which I know you're well aware. We support their views on the greenbelt in their entirety, and we recommend their specific report to you. Likewise, we agree with many groups who have emphasized not building new highways until parallel investment in better transit is provided and not allowing uses like gravel pits or landfill sites inside the greenbelt.

For our seven recommendations:

(1) If we expect farming to continue in the greenbelt, we have to control the problems of near-urban farming—you've just heard about them from a previous speaker—and support the opportunities for marketing local food production. There are many problems we could mention, but also some positive opportunities for farming near the urban edge. Every other farmland preservation program in North America that we have looked at has combined efforts to protect the farmland, as you propose in Bill 135, with programs to support farmers. So first, control the problems—trespass, traffic and so on—and second, support the investment they require to take advantage of new marketing opportunities for local food production, for the farmers who choose to stay and farm in the greenbelt. Not all will. The things we could do include community-supported agriculture, local farm markets, crops for the multicultural market of Toronto and so on. Those investments need support if they're going to happen in the way some people envision them happening in the greenbelt in the future.

Our fear is that without the right mix of support programs, there's a very real likelihood that over the space of one generation, most farmers in the greenbelt will eventually sell to non-farm residents, presumably on retiring, leaving the greenbelt as an enormous exclusive rural residential area and not protected farmland at all. To meet the purpose of your own legislation, we must not allow that to happen.

(2) Support young entrepreneurs wishing to enter farming in the near-urban region. This should be pretty simple. There are numerous programs like this all across the US associated with farmland preservation programs there, and I think it's something we could do that would be very positive here.

(3) Develop some of the new legal tools that will assist in farmland preservation, like agricultural easements. These could be easily adapted with a very minor change to the Ontario Heritage Act, which already allows easements for a variety of purposes but does not specify agriculture. Agriculture should have the same treatment as other land uses under those types of conservation easements held by conservation charities.

(4) Tax policies. There are numerous taxes we could talk about, but as examples: the provincial capital gains

tax on donations of land to conservation charities, the land transfer tax on purchases by conservation charities like the land trust that work in the greenbelt area, and the Assessment Act, which needs to be clarified to support things like agricultural easements and to support those value-added on-farm businesses that farmers are very concerned about.

1710

(5) In our view, there should be rules to enforce greater densities on the urban side of the greenbelt at the same time as the greenbelt itself is established farther away from the city. If you're looking at the science, one of the fundamental bits of science is the mapping of prime agricultural land. In fact, I teach in the department where that mapping was all originally done. There are areas of prime agricultural land immediately south of the greenbelt that have not been included and are not apparently needed for urban growth for decades yet. We think they should be in the greenbelt.

(6) This is probably a controversial one. We think there are creative ways to address environmental services and inequity in the land market within the greenbelt. Farmers have raised the central issue of compensation for lost development rights and cited the case of Pennsylvania. We understand clearly that the Canadian Constitution does not allow compensation for lost development rights in those terms directly, unlike the American, which is one of the problems of copying the American approach. However, we believe there are some creative solutions here that have not yet been considered.

First, we all need to admit that the farm community faces very bleak economic times. We don't think that urban consumers understand this enough. But whether it's BSE or the plunging grain prices at the moment, the farmers' plight is very serious. The incredibly distorting subsidies that the US and Europe pour into agriculture put our farmers in a very difficult position. The very least we can do is recognize this and have some sympathy with the broader issue of farm viability. But if we don't find some way to solve those issues, we will eventually lose the choice of local food production.

Secondly, we need to admit that, although compensation for lost development rights may not be legitimate, there is nevertheless a real question of equity. Prices are sky high outside the greenbelt and prices are going to be lower inside the greenbelt. There is an inequity that is created.

There are several creative, if partial, answers. The previously mentioned programs to support innovation in near-urban agriculture would be one. Programs to provide payments for environmental services, such as the agricultural advisory team recommended, would be another. We recommend further that the province consider a program for something like the transfer of development credits. There's a partial means of addressing the inequity in land values where the greenbelt would be a source, for example, of density points awarded according to a formula by the government. Urban development regions would be target areas where developers could

buy density points and use them to increase density. Such a program would operate on the open market, although government regulated, so it would go a long way to redress the balance of windfall profits on the urban side and lower land values on the greenbelt side. It would not violate the basic principle of crown control over land use, because the crown would assign the points. Systems similar to this have been used elsewhere in Canada, and we think by looking at some creative ideas like this, there is a middle road we can find.

My last recommendation is about leapfrogging. We've already seen leapfrogging, both in terms of new communities proposed and in terms of local councils like Guelph and Kitchener-Waterloo discussing the greater pressure they feel they will face for extra development. In our view, from the point of protecting farmland, the leapfrogging issue is the most serious. If Bill 135 leads to purchase of land outside the greenbelt on even better farmland in southwestern Ontario for urban development, then that is the worst possible result of a greenbelt. If the greenbelt contributes to greater urban growth and loss of farmland further south and west, then it is entirely counterproductive. Instead, a major effort should be made to redirect urban growth through strategic infrastructure investment to areas of lower land quality, lower climatic quality and away from the key farmlands of southwestern Ontario.

The Ontario Farmland Trust proposes that you make all of the rest of the productive agricultural land in southern Ontario outside the greenbelt into an agricultural land reserve, where land will be protected from urban development and preserved for food production as the primary use. At the same time, we propose that you put in place a task force to create a future food production plan for southern Ontario as part of this initiative. Such a step would combine the bold vision of a greenbelt for urban containment, on the one hand, with a vision for farming and food in the rest of southern Ontario and be a truly creative step forward. If the greenbelt provides a permanent urban boundary, farmers also require a permanent boundary around land that will be used for agriculture in the future. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Dr. Hilts. You've given us about a month—a minute. A slip of the tongue. No, you can't have a month. You can have a minute. Ms. Churley, you are the first speaker.

Ms. Churley: I'll take my month. In fact, I probably could take a month. There are a lot of ideas in here. What should I focus on? I thank you for considering the plight of the farmers in all of this, because certainly over the last three days that's been an ongoing concern and issue. I've never heard of this middle ground before. It's something I'll have to take a look at.

I guess the question would be, for the taxpayers—when you start talking about particularly speculative compensation, it's just out of the question, although some have asked for that. How would this impact on the public purse? Do you have any idea from studies that have been done?

Dr. Hilts: I'm not an expert on transferring development densities, but I understand the farm viewpoint in asking for compensation. I think it's a very reasonable request, given the situation. I also understand the Canadian Constitution and how we manage land use in Ontario, so I understand why that's not appropriate. The transfer of development density or something like that enables a system to be put in place where a landowner who is not allowed to develop could have some financial benefit by selling their density rights. A developer elsewhere, presumably still controlled by the municipal planning system so it doesn't give developers a free hand, could get greater density by buying those density points. It would operate outside the taxpayers' pocket, except of course for a government agency regulating the process. So it is a creative way to look outside the box and try and recognize the legitimacy of both points of view, giving something to the farmers—but not \$50 million; something reasonable—and reinforcing greater densities on the urban side, without costing the taxpayer a heap of money.

Ms. Churley: Very interesting.

The Chair: From the government side, Ms. Van Bommel.

Mrs. Van Bommel: Thank you, Dr. Hilts and Mr. Prince. You've given us a lot to think about; there's an awful lot. I really appreciate that you've come forward with possible solutions. This gives us something to work with and to think about, and I certainly want to have a look at all these things.

You talk about taking the protection of farmland well beyond the greenbelt and the GTA. We just recently passed an amendment to the Planning Act which now requires municipalities to be consistent with the provincial policy statement, as opposed to having just regard for it. So that strengthens the ability of municipal councils to protect farmland. Would you say that we also need then, in turn, to strengthen the provincial policy statement?

Dr. Hilts: My view is that we do. I recognize the improvements in the Planning Act, which are quite positive in terms of protecting farmland. Municipalities in the intensely agricultural part of the province still vary quite a bit in terms of the rules within their official plans and developers are still proposing, for example, entirely new communities or enormous expansions of communities like the Brantford area, to cite just one, that can lead to changes in official plans.

If you look at the agricultural land reserve in British Columbia, although there have been some complaints of minor changes around the edge, the ALR in BC has lost something in the order of 1,000 or 2,000 acres of farmland a year, so there have been minor changes here and there over the last 10 years. We have lost in the same time hundreds of thousands of acres. There's no comparison at all. The province-wide fairness and the clarity about the dominant future land use being agriculture is the certainty that farmers need for a long-term investment. That's what we really need in the agricultural sector.

The Chair: The official opposition; Mr. Hudak.

Mr. Hudak: How much time, Chair?

The Chair: You have a minute, but some of the answers are going on—

Mr. Hudak: I'll be quick.

The Chair: You have a minute.

Mr. Hudak: I want to congratulate you gentlemen and the farmland trust for the creative thought that you've brought forward. I think one of the central conceits of the government's presentation is that they have to solve farm viability across Ontario as a whole. It's certainly an admirable goal, but every agricultural group that has come forward has made the suggestion that they should have a greenbelt-specific plan because those farms will be entirely different from farms outside the greenbelt. They will have certain rights taken away and they will be subject to certain elements in the plan restricting their operations. So there's an argument for a difference.

1720

I need to move a motion, Chair, as a commitment to my friend the parliamentary assistant, entitled the Brad Duguid motion:

That the committee supports an independent, transparent and public appellate tribunal with greenbelt-specific expertise to uphold the integrity of the plan.

The Chair: Do you have that written out?

Mr. Hudak: Yes.

The Chair: Do you have a question to our delegation, so I can let them go, should they wish to, while we debate this?

Mr. Hudak: Would you support an appellate tribunal, as in the motion I just moved? Will I get your vote for that?

Dr. Hilts: I would support some kind of tribunal or appeal board or advisory committee or something like that, as was originally recommended by the Greenbelt Task Force.

Mr. Hudak: Thank you. Hopefully their votes count, Chair.

The Chair: Thank you very much, gentlemen. We appreciate your being here. Thank you for your time.

We're going to get a copy of the motion for everybody before we start debating the motion. While we wait for a copy of the motion, Mr. Hudak has offered to describe the intent of the motion.

Mr. Duguid: Madam Chair, we're fine. Just read the motion out—

The Chair: I don't have it in my hand; it's gone to be copied.

Mr. Duguid: If he reads it, we'll be fine.

The Chair: He doesn't have a copy of it either; it has gone for copying. We're going to have to wait for a minute or two for it to come back.

Mr. Duguid: Perhaps we could have the next deputant begin and vote on it after the next deputant?

The Chair: Are you willing to vote on it after the next deputant? Everyone would then have a copy of it and it could be discussed after the next deputant.

Mr. Hudak: No, Chair. With due respect to the Grey Association for Democracy and Growth and Mr. Andrews, I do think it's important to have this discussion at this point in time.

The Chair: So we'll begin debate. Mr. Hudak, you have the floor.

Mr. Hudak: Thank you, Chair. We're winding down. We have two more presentations, but we've heard, from almost every group, support for some type of appellate tribunal or peer review process, whether municipal groups, agricultural groups, independent property owners, as well as environmental groups. If I recall, I think Environmental Defence and Ontario Nature as well mentioned the need for an appellate tribunal. Most important, their own task force, the MacIsaac Greenbelt Task Force, said in August 2004—on page 8 at the bottom, under "Administration and Implementation," it reads, "Provide for an appellate tribunal with greenbelt-specific expertise to uphold the integrity of the plan...." It's their own task force. What we haven't heard to date from the minister or from the government is whether they will embrace that decision or not, and then hopefully we'll get into some details of what that tribunal could rule upon.

I would ask the members opposite if they can give me the name of even a single group that has objected to this. I think the support is universal.

I'm not holding too many cards to my chest. I think folks know where I'm coming from—and my colleagues Mrs. Munro and Mr. Yakabuski—on improving this legislation. This will give you an opportunity, when amendments come forward, to present one of your own in that vein or to support mine. Hopefully, there won't be arguments against it, because there has been universal support, as well as from your commission.

I named it after my colleague Mr. Duguid because he had those infamous words, "I don't give a damn whether it's based on science or political science." But almost everybody we asked does give a damn whether it's based on political science or science, and there has been universal support for science. That's why, in my opinion, an independent tribunal that's transparent and public would be the best way to address this.

My colleague keeps repeating what I think is not accurate about my alleged support for this bill in December. He was in the House when I asked over and over again of the minister to delay this legislation to get it right, and four or five times, quite frankly, the minister said no, that he wanted to ram it through by December 15 or December 16, 2004. I think it was only through the resistance of the opposition that we provoked these hearings in the new year and the extension. I'm grateful it happened, but I do recall the minister on four or five occasions objecting to my calls to get this legislation right and to send it to committee in the new year.

I mean, I could say my colleague got up on the table and did an Irish jig during the committee, and if I said it enough times, maybe somebody reading Hansard would think it was true, but it ain't. I'd ask the member to be clear on the record. We've had grave concerns from the

beginning about this legislation. We've illustrated grave concerns, supported by the vast majority of deputants, about fundamental questions of the science and the fairness of this plan. So I do ask them—now they're getting copies of my motion—to support what their own task force has called for and to support what has been the universal call of deputants before this committee: for an appellate tribunal with greenbelt-specific expertise to uphold the integrity of the plan.

The Chair: You were honest about that, about naming it after Mr. Duguid. I thought you were being flippant. You did. Mrs. Van Bommel?

Mrs. Van Bommel: I would just like to say that at this point I really do want to hear from the other deputants. They have been here all day.

Motions like this are normally under clause-by-clause. We would all get notice of them and have time to address them properly and do our research. I think this is more appropriately done through that proper process, as opposed to surprise motions that keep coming up. He calls it the Brad Duguid motion because of the issue around the science. I have at least some of the science with me here, so I will present that to Mr. Hudak, and you can start looking at that and give it due consideration until we get to clause-by-clause.

The Chair: Ms. Churley?

Ms. Churley: I'm sure we're all anxious to move on to our last two deputants. I thought, at first blush—I went out of the room, but I rushed in after I saw it on TV. Actually, now, after listening to Mr. Hudak, I can't support the motion, because he seems to be rolling a whole bunch of things into what sounded on the surface to be very similar to an amendment that the New Democrats will be proposing, one of many, basically a tribunal to oversee the implementation of the plan. Our motion is very different and I hope we could all support and debate it. But I will hold off until clause-by-clause, because it's quite long. Mr. Hudak, you've rolled a lot of things that I couldn't support into your motion.

Mr. Hudak: I did say it was mine.

Ms. Churley: I'm just telling you that on the surface, I thought it was similar to what we're proposing, but it isn't. Therefore, I think I will vote against this. This whole area of what we mean by a tribunal can become very complex. You and I mean different things by it. I can't support your interpretation of it.

The Chair: Mr. Hudak, you're the only speaker I have left.

Mr. Hudak: Thank you, Chair. To the parliamentary assistant, thank you for the science, which was requested on the first day of the committee, but at least we got it on the last. Are the LEAR studies part of this as well?

Mrs. Van Bommel: No. There's more to come. I just wanted you to get enough to start with. If you would like the LEAR studies—

Mr. Hudak: I would like to request the LEAR studies, because if I understand what you have on your Web site, the LEAR studies talk about evaluating every

piece of agricultural land in the greenbelt area based on its agricultural viability, as well as the—

The Chair: Mr. Hudak, please just speak to the motion.

Mr. Hudak: Sure. Hopefully, the LEAR studies will be in the box?

Mrs. Van Bommel: Yes.

Mr. Hudak: To the parliamentary assistant, I don't bring the legal language of a particular amendment, which is what clause-by-clause will do next Thursday. I am simply asking the committee to provide direction to the staff and to legislative counsel so they'll know what areas we're looking for by at least supporting this principle of "an independent, transparent and public appellate tribunal with greenbelt-specific expertise to uphold the integrity of the plan." I appreciate Ms. Churley's response. There are people who have different views about the degree of independence, transparency and its public nature. What I've heard from most groups is that they like the notion of it being arm's-length, independent from government, transparent and public.

I think supporting the Brad Duguid motion helps to send direction to ministry staff and legislative counsel that this is something the committee has heard and supports, which will save us time come clause-by-clause next Thursday.

The Chair: I have no more speakers. The motion is: "That the committee supports an independent, transparent and public appellate tribunal with greenbelt-specific expertise to uphold the integrity of the plan."

Mr. Hudak: Recorded vote.

The Chair: A recorded vote has been requested. All those in favour?

Ayes

Hudak, Munro.

Nays

Churley, Duguid, Lalonde, Rinaldi, Van Bommel.

The Chair: That vote is lost.

Our next delegation is the Grey Association for Democracy and Growth. Could you please come forward? Is anybody here from the association? Last call.

1730

ANDREWS' SCENIC ACRES AND SCOTCH BLOCK WINERY

The Chair: Our last speaker today will be Andrews' Scenic Acres and Scotch Block Winery. Good afternoon. I apologize for the delay. Please identify yourself and the group you're speaking for. When you begin after the introduction, I'll give you 15 minutes. Should you get close to the end of your 15 minutes, I'll give you a warning that you're getting close to the end. If you leave time at the end, we'll be able to ask you questions.

Mr. Bert Andrews: Yes, if you could, please. I'd like about five minutes at the end for questions.

Madam Chair and committee members, my name is Bert Andrews. My wife, Lauraine, is here. We have three children: Angela, Kurtis and Valerie. The five of us own Andrews' Scenic Acres and Scotch Block Winery. We are located between Milton and Georgetown.

The Chair: Excuse me. Please stop all the side chatter that's going on. This delegation has waited a long time to be here. Please give them the attention they're due. Go ahead.

Mr. Andrews: We purchased our farm, at that time a derelict property, in 1980, from a speculator. We are not speculators or developers, who usually live off their farms or away from their farms.

Throughout the summer, we employ over 100 workers, including 12 Mexican workers. Our farm is 97 acres and we rent an additional 600 acres. On our rented land we grow cash crops, which of course is a misnomer, as you've been hearing. I have some backup information at the end of my presentation which shows the money I'm losing on soybeans, as well as a report from the OFA. We also grow fruit and vegetables.

Today I'm representing our farm as well as Halton Scotch Block Farmland Owners' Group. To understand farming better, and farming in the urban shadow particularly, I would like to invite every member of the standing committee and their assistants to our farm at your convenience. Only by walking in farmers' shoes can you become fully aware of the differences in culture between city and country. We've actually lived in the city and of course we've lived as farmers in the country since 1980. I grew up on a farm and my wife did as well.

Some of the key greenbelt issues will follow. The idea of a greenbelt is a fine motherhood concept. However, the devil is in the details. A greenbelt is an excellent concept. It is, however, in its present form, a seriously flawed outcome for society as well as for hard-working, cash-strapped farmers.

It is an urban plan with, to date, no serious input from farmers. Before a greenbelt is implemented, we recommend that the following be considered:

(1) Culture. To quote a November 2004 Maclean's magazine, "Cottagers versus farmers. Suburbs versus small towns.... This is Canada's next culture war," according to Charlie Gillis. The article is entitled The War Between Town and Country.

To quote Hugh Segal, who teaches public policy at Queen's University, "Urban versus rural is a far more important division in this country than French and English or east versus west." If you think about that for a moment, urban/rural doesn't get the kind of publicity that, say, the French question or even east versus west does, but according to some people it is actually a more important issue.

To quote David Miller, mayor of Toronto, on a federal level Ottawa "over-represents rural interests." So you can see where we come from and what we're up against in

the rural area, when the mayor of Toronto feels that we out in the country are getting too much of a play.

To quote Anthony Wilson-Smith, editor of Maclean's magazine, too many city people regard "rural areas as a theme park ... to amuse" us. Some Toronto people travel all the way to the country "only to spend all their time with other Toronto people.... As Charlie Gillis writes ... 'there's a deep disconnect' between urban and rural people."

Is it any wonder that Paul Mistele, vice-president of the OFA, was quoted in the Toronto Star as saying, "The proposed greenbelt plan is the most draconian"—I repeat, draconian—"legislation the province's farmers have ever faced." I'm a little long in the tooth and I have to say that. I've followed a lot of history too. It undermines a traditional way of life. Mistele also states that the greenbelt plan ignores environmental science and farm viability. It also ignores farm businesses and their contribution to the Ontario economy.

It is recommended that a co-operative approach to farmers be implemented, rather than the present confrontational approach or top-down type of implementation. Please respect our culture. Please respect our past and our future potential contribution to society.

To quote an OFA release of yesterday from Geri Kamenz, vice-president of the OFA, "Ontario farmers are running out of alternatives to keep their farms in production. They have called on their organizations to lobby government, but government ignores them."

I fully appreciate some of the other speakers today. The lady from Crown Bench, for example, just said it so well, the way it is out there in the farm area. Some people have said it so well. I am one of over 100 speakers, so I had to come up with something just a little different from what some of the other people have said, but anything the farmers and the lady from the winery have said in the past in these hearings, I totally concur with.

(2) "Greenbelt" the name: Calling farmland a greenbelt is like putting a red flag in front of a bull. The word "agriculture" or "farmland" needs to be in the name. It is recommended that you work with OFA, OFVGA and the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario to develop a name that reflects farmers' contribution to this grand scheme. I might add that the province may wish to—this is one for you. Maybe the province would like to greenbelt all of Ontario. What would you think about that idea? Maria, what would you think about that idea, greenbelting all of Ontario? Anyway.

(3) These are some newspaper articles. All our local newspapers have been following the greenbelt very closely.

(a) 4,000-plus acres. Town of Halton Hills, January 14, 2005, special council meeting: "Now therefore be it resolved that council hereby rescinds and deletes"—4,000-plus acres, earlier recommended for inclusion in the provincial greenbelt plan—"and, further, that the region of Halton, the local municipalities within Halton region and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs be advised of this resolution."

(b) Newspaper articles.

From the Halton Compass: "Halton Hills Council Rescinds Greenbelt Addition":

"We need to work with the farming community to bolster their viability": Councillor Jane Fogal.

"Let's correct the wrong. Slower and right is better than fast and wrong": Councillor Joan Robson.

"This may seem like a flip-flop, but it shows that we are listening to the people": Mayor Rick Bonnette.

"We made the wrong decision. We need to correct that": Councillor Clark Somerville.

From the Georgetown Independent: "Council 'Flip-Flops' on Controversial Greenbelt Decision." "In a complete reversal of its earlier decision, Halton Hills council on Friday rescinded its recommendation to the province that about 4,700 additional acres of Halton Hills farmland be added to the proposed greenbelt plan."

The New Tanner: "Council Backpedals on Disputed Greenbelt Land" and "Council Reverses Decision on Greenbelt Land."

Acton/Georgetown editorial: "Righting a Wrong." This is an editorial by the editor of the paper, and I'd like to emphasize this one right here. "It's not often that a collection of politicians will admit they were wrong, but that unusual scene unfolded last Friday in council chambers when Halton Hills councillors rescinded its recommendation to the province...."

The Canadian Champion: "Agriculture Groups Hoping for Greenbelt Delay."

"More time is needed to get the details right. We would recommend an additional year to get the science and consultation with each landowner completed."

"While [Milton Mayor Gord Krantz] said he has no problem with the legislation being delayed, he wasn't optimistic that the province would feel the same way, noting that he thinks it'll 'push it through.'

"Mr. Krantz said he thinks in bringing forward the greenbelt plan, the province is telling municipalities that they haven't administered their official plans well, which he noted just isn't true in Halton."

The Grower: "Greenbelted Residents Belt Back." There's a copy of that attached.

I would recommend to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs that they consult with farmers and municipalities in the same open-minded, problem-solving atmosphere that has been recently exemplified by our Halton north municipalities of Milton and Halton Hills. I talk here about the difference between the rural and the urban. We wouldn't get that kind of response in Oakville and Burlington, obviously. You had a speaker here on Monday, Oakvillegreen. I'm sure if I was in Oakville and I was wanting just to preserve green space, I would probably feel the same way as Allan Elgar did, but we're not. We're farmers and we're in the north of Halton. It just keeps disconnecting as you go farther into the urban areas.

1740

(4) Places to grow: This plan needs to be developed before the greenbelt plan to assure citizens that no

conflict will arise. It is understood that other cities around the world were studied to learn about their successes and failure. Were any greenbelt areas in the USA or around the world studied to learn about their successes and failures? We would recommend the provincial government do so before legislation is passed. If you did any of that studying, why don't you let us know? We haven't heard about it, and we know there are other areas where they want to preserve farmland for all of the right reasons.

(5) Farm viability: Viability of farming must be fixed first. When you get to be my age, you get a little cynical. We've heard about this protecting farmland. Well, where is the action? Anybody can talk. Talk is cheap, right? It doesn't cost a thing. Where is the action? We cannot accept a "trust me" philosophy on agricultural viability. Show us that you are serious about working with agriculture on the greenbelt issue and farm viability.

A local, provincial and Canadian food supply vision needs to be developed. If farms are viable, land will be kept green. The recommendation is for each farm commodity or sector to put forward what is needed for that commodity to be viable.

I don't know if everybody sees it my way, but that's the way I see it. I was just reading something from the OFA this morning that said there are 264 commodities. But the other guy can't tell you what's best. The maple syrup people can tell you what's best for maple syrup. The pig farmers can't tell you what's best for the maple syrup farmers. You've got to deal with each of them. Once again, there is no one philosophy that fits all. Sure, there are general farm programs like CAIS and there used to be NISA, but that's something different. That's not what we're talking about here.

The recommendation is for each farm commodity or sector to put forward what is recommended for that commodity. Farms within the urban shadow have unique negative challenges and unique positive potential. Normal farm practices, infrastructure and farm types are lacking. To realize the potential of marketing farm products in the greater Golden Horseshow to a readily available market needs serious commitment at local, provincial and federal levels. However, in all fairness, Greg Sorbara, who we were hearing about earlier here with regard to the Boyd Park—and I would certainly support what Mr. Hudak put forward in both of his motions because they made sense. We're farmers. We're independent thinkers. We don't follow some party line. But Greg Sorbara, finance minister, in this case has reversed the policy on maple syrup production facilities. As it now stands, the production of maple syrup is no longer viewed as an industrial operation but rather as an extension of a farming operation, or what is referred to as a value-retention operation. The provincial government needs to understand that many crops have a value-retention component and need to be treated with the same tax breaks as maple syrup.

With regard to value-added activities, using produce grown on the farm to make new products such as pies,

jams etc, the OFVGA believes that the system needs to recognize the origin of the products being used. I've also attached a Greenmarket Farmers Market Web site release from New York City. These are the types of programs that will keep farmland green—there has to be a program; don't just green it, it doesn't work—and contribute to the environment. For farmers to keep farmland green, it must be market-driven. There is no pie in the sky. There is no magic wand. Farming is a business. It has got to be market-driven, not legislation-driven. We need action on farm viability, not words, as I was saying earlier.

At Scotch Block Winery, we submit our fruit wines to the LCBO for quality certification. Quality certification, or QC, must undergo the same quality tasting and technical analysis as VQA wines. Our Ontario fruit wineries' association has been lobbying the provincial government for the same treatment as VQA wines. To date, we have been unsuccessful in our lobbying efforts. As a matter of fact, several fruit wineries have actually gone out of business and have gone broke.

I don't know what it is, and I hit all parties in this—I don't know what happens. My 92-year-old father has a good story. He says, "Before an election, everybody wants to listen to you. After an election, the ruling party somehow seems to go deaf or something. I don't know what happens."

The Chair: Mr. Andrews, we're listening, but you only have a minute and a half of our time.

Mr. Andrews: Oh. Gee whiz. I've got a lot more.

The Chair: I know. If you could summarize.

Mr. Andrews: (6) Farm equity, mortgage, borrowing value and farmers. Are there any questions? If that's all I've got for time—it's all written here—are there any questions?

The Chair: I'll give 30 seconds to each party, beginning with the government.

Mr. Lalonde: I have a question, but I'm going to go ahead immediately with your winery. We know that Jim Watson, the Minister of Consumer and Business Services, has been dealing with the LCBO to make sure that we promote Ontario wine more than we do at the present time. But my question is, should there be a quota in the cash crop sector?

Mr. Andrews: It's not a business that quotas would be of any value in. Supply management would not work in that sector. We're working on prices out of Chicago, so it's not a market that—

Mr. Lalonde: I know you're going through a tough time. We just got the release this afternoon on the price of corn, wheat, everything. It's very low, the lowest in the last 25 years. But I really believe that we have saturated the market at the present time because we depend too much on exportation.

Mr. Andrews: It's not what we grow here in Ontario when it comes to these so-called cash crops; it's how much they grow in the States, how much they grow in Brazil, how much they're growing around the world. It's totally a world market. As to what we do here, all we can

hope for is that you can give us the same tools as the American farmers have, and the European farmers, and then we can do our thing and compete with them.

The Chair: From the official opposition, Mrs. Munro.

Mrs. Munro: Thank you very much for hanging in here all day, and for coming here to present to us. I want to jump to a couple of the points that you were unable to bring out.

The question of leapfrogging is certainly one that I'm very conscious of in terms of this legislation and the proposal, that it will do that. You mention commuters driving through the greenbelt, people then going to Waterloo–Wellington. Were you serious in suggesting—I believe you did earlier in your idea—that all agricultural land should—

Mr. Andrews: Yes, I was. I said this in the beginning. There's two or three things that—when I first heard about the greenbelt, I said, "Why are these lines here?" That's the first thing. "What about economics? There's nothing here about economics, one way or the other." I'm sorry. What was your question?

Mrs. Munro: I think you've answered it, because it is an economic issue. With leapfrogging, you then create a further un-level playing field.

Mr. Andrews: Yes. We need a level playing field within Ontario; we need a level playing field within North America; we need a level playing field on a world basis. Other countries support their farmers. Europeans and Americans support their farmers better than here. We need action, not words.

The Chair: Ms. Churley.

Ms. Churley: That was going to be my question, and you just answered it, about other jurisdictions. So thank you very much for your presentation today.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Andrews. We appreciate your being here today and your passion.

Mr. Andrews: Thank you very much for the time, and for everybody hanging in. I was surprised that a lot of my farm friends were able to hang in, because they need to get home and feed the cows and whatever.

GREENSPACE CONSULTING ASSOCIATES

The Chair: We have one more delegation. Greenspace Consulting Associates. Could they come forward? Good afternoon. Could you identify yourself and the group that you're speaking for? You'll have 15 minutes. Should you get close to the end I will warn you that you're getting close so that there's time for questions, should you want that.

Mr. Jim Faught: Yes, I will allow some time for questions. My name is Jim Faught. I am the president of Greenspace Consulting Associates. It's appropriate that a member of the Greenbelt Task Force rounds out your hearings this week.

As a member of the Greenbelt Task Force, we made a number of recommendations to the government under a consensus from a very wide range of perspectives.

1750

Just before I get to that, I want to give you a couple of pieces of background on myself as well, so you understand where I'm coming from. I was also a member of the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel, with Hazel McCallion as chair, so we dealt with the entire Golden Horseshoe as a planning perspective under the previous government, and those recommendations are moving forward under the growth plan that we see to this date. As well, I was a member of the Ontario Rural Council, so I do understand rural issues and I sympathize with the farmers who have been making delegations today about the issues that are facing them.

Before I get into some of the issues of the greenbelt, I want to let the committee know that I'm absolutely clear on this: I do support Bill 135, I do support the fact that the greenbelt is moving forward and I do understand that the concept, as it's moving forward, is a good one. There are a couple of issues that I'd like to bring to your attention, though.

The first one is the fact that the agricultural viability report, which was not meant to be something to be parked and left on a shelf, was a recommendation from the Greenbelt Task Force for Lyle Vanclief and Bob Bedggood to actually get to the source of the issues of agricultural viability, not just for the greenbelt area but for Ontario. That report sits on the shelf, as far as I'm concerned, to this date. Some recommendations, I understand, have made some headway, but we haven't heard from the government about what's moving forward with that task force. That task force's recommendations are valid; they would satisfy a lot of the concerns that we're hearing from the farmers in the room today and I think we need to move forward on that.

Second is the appellate tribunal. Bill 135 is silent on that, and I support the motion put forward earlier today that there needs to be a clearer appellate tribunal. This is a complex issue of this greenbelt. It's a lot of land area and we don't want it to fall on the back of the OMB to decide where this needs to go. So the appellate tribunal is an important piece of recommendation from the Greenbelt Task Force, and it's missing. So we want to see what's going to happen with that.

Beyond that, in the implementation phase, there is some silence at this point, but we understand there's work behind the scenes, of course. When the Oak Ridges moraine was announced, there was a \$15-million trust fund to put dollars into the pockets of landowners for the implementation of the greenbelt and the Oak Ridges moraine initiatives. We need to see similar dollars in a trust fund to work toward implementation of the Greenbelt Task Force recommendations.

At the public policy forum last fall, the keynote speaker was Roy Romanow, who you know has been working on health care in Canada. He said that good public policy and legislation requires only two things: an open, transparent process, which I believe this was—you've heard that some farmers and other landowners did not know that these open houses were going on. They

were widely publicized, they were widely attended and I feel that there was a very good public representation from landowners and all who were interested. The task force reviewed the summary of those recommendations to make sure that we would adjust our recommendations in our final report in August, so I feel there was an open and transparent process.

The second thing that Roy Romanow said for good public policy and legislation was that it has to reflect the values of the people. I think we've done that with the Greenbelt Task Force recommendations. We do reflect the values of the people as long as the agricultural viability task force recommendations are looked at seriously. That's the missing piece here.

I want to get to specifics around two pieces of geography in the plan, in the map. We heard earlier today about Boyd Park. Boyd Park is an area that does need to have special consideration because of its unique natural area characteristics. I do support the fact that it needs to be included in this greenbelt, wholly. Not partially—it needs to be entirely included.

There are a number of other minor mapping errors that I won't elaborate on here today, but those are being worked through. There's lots of recommendations from municipalities and others for you to treat those mapping issues.

There is good science behind this. I understand that later studies were undertaken. I understand the natural heritage mapping and all that went into that because I was the past executive director of Ontario Nature, which worked on big picture and blueprint mapping with the government to make sure the natural heritage features were combined into a connected system. Those are good pieces of science. I understand the later studies—I haven't seen them—are also good pieces of work if they're conducted properly.

A new piece of information has come up since the task force recommendations that you need to consider carefully, and that is the Pickering airport. The Pickering airport recommendations came forward just prior to Christmas, and with the runway alignment that's set for that airport and the environmental assessment that's going to be conducted by the federal government and the constriction of land area growth for North Pickering, there needs to be a harmonization of the environmental assessment as to what's going to happen with the federal lands for the airport, the north Pickering lands in Seaton and the agricultural preserve.

I'm calling for a full environmental assessment of the entire parcel, harmonized with the federal legislation that's happening and moving forward with the environmental assessment for that parcel. There's only one taxpayer and we don't need to conduct two separate environmental assessments. We need to conduct one for the entire north Pickering parcel.

The recommendations put forward by the farmland preservation group were absolutely right on and I support those completely. There needs to be some inventive ways for those landowners at the edge to be compensated

appropriately, and not in a government fashion but in a non-government fashion, in the way they can be compensated. That's happened elsewhere in the world. In the Napa Valley and other places, that has really proven to be very successful.

I know it's been a long day and I don't want to belabour those points. So thank you, Madam Chair, and I would leave the floor open for questions.

The Chair: Thank you. You have left us with almost three minutes a party, so beginning with the official opposition.

Mr. Hudak: Jim, it's great to see you. Congratulations. I'm inspired by your presentation and I'm going to move a motion which I'll make sure gets circulated, Chair, for debate later. I know my colleague, Mrs. Munro, has a question. It's the Faught/Andrews motion based on our last two presentations. It reads:

"The committee agrees with the Greenbelt Task Force that:

"Protection of land alone does not ensure agriculture viability, and the province should pursue complementary initiatives including economic development, research and monitoring, promotion of agricultural easements and land trusts for farmers who participate in conservation activities and use best practices and management."

I'd be pleased to table that debate until after Mr. Faught's presentation.

The Chair: Do you have any questions of Mr. Faught?

Mrs. Munro: I do. I wanted to ask you, as I listened to what you had said and certainly picked up on a number of these key issues that we've heard in the hearings and so I really appreciated, given your background as a task force member, but I'm wondering if you would comment on another issue that I think is equally important, and that is the issue of a growth plan, because many who have come here to the hearings have talked about the fact that that's missing and that while you're looking at, really, the same coin, the two sides, on one side you're talking about preservation and those kinds of initiatives and on the other hand, we've got a gap here. We don't know. Clearly, with the pressure of population and growth and things like that, it seems to many participants that we're trying to walk on one leg so to speak. I wondered if you had any comments from your perspective on the need for a growth plan to be set out simultaneously with initiatives like this.

Mr. Faught: The task force was very clear on that, that we wanted to see them come forward together, and that hasn't happened, as you know. There has been a draft plan put out, but we're waiting to see after the public consultations what the next draft will bring forward for us. There is a missing link here. These two plans need to go hand in glove together as we move forward so we know where orderly development will happen and where green space will be protected.

Second to that is this permanent protection element. Bill 135 does have a mistake and I'm sure plenty of other delegations have pointed out that, that the permanence

aspect of the greenbelt is not etched in stone in Bill 135 because it does allow this rolling greenbelt to move forward, and that's where the growth plan and the greenbelt need to be seen simultaneously together to see where growth is going to happen and what's going to be green. That's got to be the deal.

Mrs. Munro: I really appreciate that.

The Chair: Your time has expired. Ms. Churley, you have three minutes.

Ms. Churley: Hi. It's nice to see you again wearing your new hat. My question is actually about that, because as a former executive director, I think up until about a month ago, of Ontario Nature, I remember you explicitly called for the inclusion of the Rouge-Duffins immediately in the greenbelt, which I'd been calling for, and I was a little bit confused about your last comments because you seem to be saying something different. So my question is, do you still support that that should be immediately put in with the greenbelt?

1800

Mr. Faught: What I support for north Pickering is that the entire parcel of property, including the agricultural preserve, the Seaton lands and the airport lands, needs to have a second look. There's been so much baggage and political baggage on all those pieces of property, including the land swap with Richmond Hill and the Seaton properties not being transparent, as I talked about earlier with the Roy Romanow good public policy axiom, that we need to have a stop, pause and a full environmental assessment—

Ms. Churley: But why? You've changed your position on that.

Mr. Faught: No, I haven't changed my position. I'm saying that that's one parcel of land, as determined by the ministry's order, for the public development act review that's going underway now. It's not separated as two parcels. It's concluded as one parcel of land.

Ms. Churley: But that wasn't the position of Ontario Nature at the time.

Mr. Faught: That's right, because it wasn't considered to be one parcel of land at that time; it was considered to be two. Now it's considered to be one parcel of land under the Ontario development planning act.

Ms. Churley: But Ontario Nature still hasn't changed its position on it.

Mr. Faught: That's right.

Ms. Churley: I'm just trying to figure out why you have.

Mr. Faught: Because there's no information regarding the airport that's come forward. The airport is going to require a second look at the entire natural heritage protection system, the agricultural protection systems in Seaton and Duffin and the airport lands.

Ms. Churley: Are you representing some of the developers now who have an interest in that land?

Mr. Faught: No. I'm representing myself here today as a task force member.

Ms. Churley: OK, but not any developers who have an interest in that land?

Mr. Faught: No. I'm representing myself as a task force member.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Churley. The government side.

Mr. Rinaldi: First of all, thank you for all the hard work you've done. I was trying to make a note of all the committees for this government and the people of Ontario. It's great to have people like you dedicated to the good of Ontarians.

Mr. Faught: Thank you.

Mr. Rinaldi: We've heard God knows how many people—you are the last one—and had God knows how many written submissions on the greenbelt legislation. One of the things that I think we did as a government was take the recommendations you folks brought forward under Smart Growth under the previous government. We didn't ignore them; we didn't shelve them.

Mr. Faught: And I commend you for that.

Mr. Rinaldi: I want to make that very clear. We took the greenbelt legislation that we've got before us now and the Places to Grow legislation that's going to come forward to work hand in hand with this, which hopefully will have second reading in the House within a couple of weeks. But I keep hearing—and you made the comment part of the recommendation—that we need this to tie in with that and that with the other. In the meantime, I think we've wasted some 50 years in Ontario, not sure who's going to wag what where and when.

Having said that, being that the legislation we're talking about today is a framework for the greenbelt—whatever those boundaries are, whatever those inclusions or exclusions will be after all we hear today and are going to hear down the road—do you think we still have to wait, or can we carry on with the piece of legislation knowing there are others to follow? Having had just a year, we're getting things on the go.

Mr. Faught: I think I would speak on behalf of the rest of the task force members: I know the consensus was that we wanted to see them come forward together; we wanted to look at where the growth was going to happen and where the greenbelt was going to happen. I commend the government for not shelving the 44 recommendations of the central Ontario Smart Growth panel. Those have all been duly looked at, and I can see the recommendations fully fleshed out throughout the Places to Grow document. The consultations with the public have happened. What we're asking for is, let's see the next version.

The Chair: Thank you for your delegation. We appreciate your being here. Should you wish to stay and hear the outcome of the motion that's been named in your honour, you may. Please feel free to stay.

Committee, we have before us the Faught/Andrews motion: "The committee agrees with the Greenbelt Task Force that protection of land alone does not ensure agricultural viability, and the province should pursue complementary initiatives, including economic develop-

ment, research and monitoring, promotion of agricultural easements and land trusts for farmers who participate in conservation activities and use best practices and management.”

Mr. Hudak: Just a bit of background. I know it’s been a long day, and I appreciate the patience of my colleagues, the clerk and her staff, the staff of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, and the folks who have been with us all day. I thought it was an excellent wrap-up by Bert Andrews and Jim Faught, both of impeccable credentials in their own fields, who spoke passionately about the issues.

I’ve lifted, as members probably know, the statement beginning with “protection of land” and ending with “practices and management” directly from page 5 of Toward a Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt, the Greenbelt Task Force report.

I don’t want to go out on a losing note. I brought forward a couple of motions today. They both fell. I don’t want to strike out. I do think this is the easiest one to support. I thought the first two had a chance. Boyd Conservation Area had pretty well unanimous support for inclusion, but sadly we lost that vote. Maybe we’ll see an amendment in that regard next week. I thought the second one, with respect to the appellate tribunal, would win support, but it was defeated.

I believe this one, like those other two, has had universal support. I cannot remember a single deputant who came before this committee who disagreed. I think that everyone in their presentations, or who was asked, said there should be some sort of agricultural viability plan as part of this initiative. We’ve certainly heard that from the Minister of Agriculture and, I suspect, from the Minister of Municipal Affairs—I’m not positive. But if this committee is worthy of its name, if they truly listened to the input that was heard—everybody who addressed this question—as far as I know there was 100% support for a farm viability strategy within the greenbelt area.

So I do hope that members will pass this. I think that will give direction to staff. I know Mr. McKenzie will be working through the weekend on these things and would like to know if this is going to be one of the priorities for possible amendments. I hope that if we do win the committee’s support, staff will immediately begin to work on this to ensure that when this legislation is called back to the House, as I suspect it will be some time in February, there will be an agricultural support plan along with it. I do ask members to support my motion; otherwise, I’ll be driving back to Niagara sad that I lost three in a row.

The Chair: On that heartbreaking note, Mrs. Van Bommel.

Mrs. Van Bommel: When I was a municipal councillor in East Williams township, we had a bylaw that said that after 11 o’clock at night we would adjourn our meetings. The logic behind having that kind of bylaw

was simply that you do not make good decisions when you’re tired. We are over an hour past what was supposed to be the adjournment time. People have been here for four days in a row. We have people sitting here who would love to go home. I myself don’t feel that I can make a proper decision on this at this point, so I’m going to ask Mr. Hudak to bring this to clause-by-clause next Thursday and then we can give it proper and due consideration.

The Chair: Mr. Hudak?

Mr. Hudak: No—

The Chair: Is that your answer? Can we just—

Mr. Hudak: No. I do have to; I’ve been provoked. It’s no surprise. My cards are on the table: I will be bringing forward amendments to support the agricultural community for a viability plan within the greenbelt area. We’ve heard some excellent ideas, and there has been almost universal support. So I will be bringing forward hopefully appropriately worded legal language for this. This is simply a motion to encourage me, as I’m writing these through the weekend, to show that the committee supports it. It’s not complex. It was recommended by the task force, the Minister of Agriculture has spoken about it, and I would say members who have been before this committee have said it almost universally. I’m not asking for some complex decision; it is very straightforward. It’s what your own committee said; I’ve heard no arguments to the contrary. As I said, importantly, I know ministry staff are anxious to get writing the amendments that will be coming before us on the 10th. This will put it at the top of their list if I have all members’ support.

The Chair: I have no other speakers and the motion is in front of you. Would you like me to read it again? No?

Mr. Hudak: Recorded vote.

Ayes

Hudak, Munro.

Nays

Duguid, Lalonde, Rinaldi, Van Bommel.

The Chair: On that sad note, that is lost.

This draws to a close our hearings for the day. Thank you to all remaining witnesses, MPPs and ministry staff for their participation in the hearings. I’d like to remind members that as per our subcommittee report, amendments are due in the clerk’s office by 1 o’clock on Tuesday, February 8.

This committee stands adjourned until 10 a.m., Thursday, February 10, in committee room 1 for clause-by-clause consideration.

The committee adjourned at 1809.

Continued from overleaf

Merrybrook Farm.....	G-813
Mr. Bob Merry	
Ontario Farmland Trust.....	G-815
Dr. Stewart Hilts	
Andrews' Scenic Acres and Scotch Block Winery.....	G-819
Mr. Bert Andrews	
Greenspace Consulting Associates.....	G-822
Mr. Jim Faught	

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