



Township of Southgate
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Township of Southgate Council Member Notice of Motion

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 12th 2023

FOR: April 20th, 2023

TO: Council

FROM: Councillor Joan John

RE: Notice of Motion regarding Support of Bill 5
Stopping Harassment and Abuse by Local Leaders Act

Comments

As a result of receiving correspondence to advocate for Bill 5 – Stopping Harassment and Abuse by Local Leaders Act, I was encouraged to research what has been recommended and advocated for in the area of ethical and respectful behavior as being fundamental to continued public faith in democracy.

In 2021, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) submitted recommendations to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to strengthen municipal Codes of Conduct for elected officials. At its March 24th, 2023 meeting, and in a letter to Premier Doug Ford on March 27, 2023 (attached), the AMO Board reaffirmed its recommendations and further made recommendations to prohibit a member from running for election in the term in which he/she was removed from office and the subsequent term of office.

There have been many delays in seeing change. Bill 5 - Stopping Harassment and Abuse by Local Leaders Act would 'permit municipalities to direct the Integrity Commissioner to apply to the court to vacate a member's seat when found in contravention of the Code of Conduct and failure to comply with the municipality's workplace violence and harassment policies.'

Recommendation:

Whereas, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) has called on the Government of Ontario to support legislation that would:

- Update municipal Codes of Conduct to account for workplace safety and harassment
- Create a flexible administrative penalty regime, adapted to the local economic and financial circumstances of municipalities across Ontario
- Increase training of municipal Integrity Commissioners to enhance consistency of investigations and recommendations across the Province
- Allow municipalities to apply to a member of the judiciary to remove a sitting member if recommended through the report of a municipal Integrity Commissioner

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- Prohibit a member so removed from sitting for election in the term of removal and the subsequent term of office; and

Whereas, AMO believes that these changes will improve the working environment of municipal elected and staff officials and send a strong signal regarding the standard of conduct expected of elected officials and protect anyone that may be subject to egregious behaviour;

Now, therefore be it resolved that the Council of the Township of Southgate supports the correspondence to the Premier of Ontario by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and calls on the Government of Ontario to unanimously support Bill 5 – Stopping Harassment and Abuse by Local Leaders Act; and

That this resolution be circulated to The Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Kate Manson-Smith, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, MPP Rick Byers ,MP Alex Ruff, and all Ontario municipal councils and AMO.

Sincerely,

Councillor Joan John