



Randy Pettapiece, MPP
Perth-Wellington

Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario

January 13, 2014

Sharon Vokes
County Clerk/Director of Council Services
County of Grey
595 9th Ave E
Owen Sound, ON N4K 3E3

Dear Ms. Vokes:

Re: Resolution on Joint and Several Liability

Rising municipal insurance premiums must be reined in. For years, municipalities have asked the province to address joint and several liability, which is the primary contributor to rising premiums. Municipalities, often targeted as insurers of last resort, can be on the hook for massive damage awards even if they are deemed just one percent responsible.

We are told that 38 U.S. states have enacted some form of proportionate liability, and that other jurisdictions are also pursuing reform. Municipalities have said that we in Ontario cannot afford to wait any longer. I agree. As a former member of a municipal council, I fully appreciate the impact of rapidly rising insurance premiums. It is unfair and unrealistic for the provincial government to allow this situation to continue – especially as it affects small and rural municipalities, which can least afford to pay.

Municipalities have heard many promises for discussion, including former Premier Dalton McGuinty's commitment at the 2011 AMO conference. But the time for discussion is over. We need to impress upon the government, in a constructive way, that it must take meaningful action. Recently I introduced the following private member's resolution in the Ontario legislature:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should protect taxpayers from higher property taxes by implementing a comprehensive, long-term solution to reform joint and several liability insurance for municipalities by no later than June 2014, addressing the alarming rise in insurance premiums due to rising litigation and claim costs.

Because this issue affects municipalities across the province, I believe there is good reason for all MPPs, regardless of party affiliation, to support my resolution. I also believe it is important that the government act by June, before the legislature breaks for the summer.

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If your municipality supports the intent of my resolution, I would encourage you to consider passing a formal resolution to support it. If your Council decides to proceed in this way, I would appreciate receiving a copy of your resolution as soon as possible. Debate on this resolution is scheduled for February 27, 2014.

If you have any feedback on this issue, or if you require any additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me at 519-272-0660 or by email: randy.pettapiececo@pc.ola.org.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Randy Pettapiece". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Randy Pettapiece, MPP
Perth-Wellington

RP:sy