

May 14, 2012

Laurie Scott, M.P.P.
Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock
Room 434, Main Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A8

Subject: Bill 73 Endangered Species Amendment Act

Dear Ms. Scott:

As Ontario's business advocate, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) is a federation of 160 local chambers of commerce and boards of trade in Ontario, representing 60,000 businesses of all sizes, in all economic sectors and from every area of the province. Our members employ about two million people and produce about 17 percent of Ontario's Gross Domestic Product.

The OCC is a proponent of fostering a prosperous and healthy Ontario by supporting and encouraging the growth of local industries. An increasing appetite for local products, a global demand for forest products, combined with rising populations present significant opportunities for the forest sector in Ontario. However, these opportunities cannot be realized without sufficient protection of a predictable and affordable wood supply. Currently, environmental legislation is drafted without due consideration of economic and social impacts, thereby leading to unbalanced and unsustainable policies that negatively affect Ontario industries. The OCC applauds Bill 73 for ensuring economic and social factors are key components of species at risk recovery strategies.

The OCC recently ratified a policy resolution calling for three pillars of sustainability to be considered in protecting Ontario's productive forest land base and requesting the public release of socio-economic impact assessments of all policies that could reduce the provincial fibre supply and/or reduce access to the land base.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for Bill 73. If you have questions or comments or would like to discuss further, please do not hesitate to contact Angie Brennand at 416.482.5222 ext.2320 or angiebrennand@occ.on.ca.

Yours sincerely,



Allan O'Dette
President & CEO