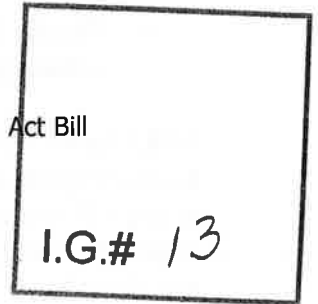


From: AMO Communications [mailto:communicate@amo.on.ca]
Sent: December-12-13 5:11 PM
To: Karen Landry
Subject: AMO Breaking News - a) Transit Panel Recommendations, b) Municipal Election Act Bill



TO THE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION OF THE CLERK AND COUNCIL

December 12, 2013

Two Matters of Significance for All Municipal Governments

This Breaking News deals with: a) 'Golden Panel' Report on Transit Funding and, b) Private Member's Bill on Municipal Election Amendments

A) Transit Investment Strategy Advisory Panel Report Released

The final report of the Transit Investment Strategy Advisory Panel chaired by Anne Golden has been released. Hon. Glen Murray, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, said the government is reviewing the report and will propose its investment plan in the spring.

The Panel recommends new dedicated revenue for Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) transit projects from a combination of sources including added Gas Tax, Corporate Income Tax and Harmonized Sales Tax revenues. They would raise between nearly \$3 billion to \$3.3 billion depending on the option chosen. Chair Anne Golden said the cost of congestion in the GTHA is \$6 billion per year. While drivers would pay between \$130 and \$260 in increased gasoline taxes, the cost of not implementing the Metrolinx plan could add \$700 annually for the average driver.

Members should note that the various tax increases are recommended to apply province-wide. However, the Panel recommends that revenues raised outside the GTHA should be available for priorities elsewhere in Ontario, but it provided no direction on what and how this would be implemented. It did recommend that for the GTHA these revenues would need to be separately managed from other government funds.

The report raises several questions that AMO believes must be satisfactorily addressed in advance of the government's plan. These are:

- What effect will province-wide tax increases have on regional/local economies outside the GTHA, especially where those economies are contracting or stagnant?
- How will these proposed measures impact the competitiveness of international and interprovincial border regions?
- How will revenue raised from outside of the GTHA be allocated to non-GTHA municipal governments? Who and what would be eligible? How would transparency be achieved?

- Would the economic impact of infrastructure investments in the regions identified outweigh the impact of increased costs to businesses and residents?

AMO looks forward to discussion of these questions. Other recommendations of interest to municipalities include: increasing municipal debt to finance local transit improvements in the GTHA; better aligning GTHA land use and transportation planning and intensification; Metrolinx governance; and an annual policy forum of elected officials in the GTHA.

Members are encouraged to review the report at: <http://transitpanel.ca/news/report-making-the-move-to-fund-transit?p=1>.

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B) Municipal Elections Bill Introduced

Yesterday, Jim McDonell, MPP introduced Bill 152, the *Functioning Municipal Councils Act, 2013*. The Bill advances the date when terms of office would commence by two weeks (from December 1 to the second Monday in November). This shortens the "lame duck" period to reflect the lame duck period prior to 2010. The Bill would also amend penalties respecting campaign financing. Candidates would be provided 60 days to comply with expense filing deadlines or payment requirements prior to the imposition of penalties including forfeiting office and ineligibility to hold office until after the next election. AMO made previous public submissions and the above matters are consistent with those submissions. The Bill, if passed, would also shorten the timeframe of vote recounts. A full copy of Bill 152 is available [here](#).

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