

November 30, 2023

The Honourable Paul Calandra  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
17th Floor,  
777 Bay Street  
Toronto, Ontario,  
M7A 2J3

Sent via email to: [minister.mah@ontario.ca](mailto:minister.mah@ontario.ca) and [PlanningConsultation@ontario.ca](mailto:PlanningConsultation@ontario.ca)  
and submitted online through the Environmental Registry of Ontario

Dear Minister Calandra

**RE: ERO # 019-7739 Proposal to return lands to the Greenbelt - Greenbelt Statute Law Amendment Act, 2023**

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), I am writing to address the recent changes to the Greenbelt Plan and Greenbelt Act and reiterate our position on Greenbelt lands and the protection of the agricultural land base.

OFA proudly represents more than 38,000 farm businesses across the province, supporting our members and the agriculture industry on issues, legislation and regulations governed by all levels of government. We are the leading agricultural advocate for Ontario farmers, their businesses, and their communities.

We first wish to acknowledge reversal of the Greenbelt land removals and extend our appreciation for this decision. We look forward to working with the government to balance the need for housing with the protection of agricultural land without jeopardizing production of food, fibre, fuel and flowers in Ontario.

OFA maintains its current position and recommends the province should take a holistic, systematic, province-wide approach that prioritizes protecting agricultural lands and identifies the most appropriate areas for growth with justifiable criteria and comprehensive analysis. OFA encourages the provincial government to continue to consult with experts and stakeholders, while exploring other avenues to address housing supply which do not sacrifice farmland or the Agricultural System.

The OFA feels that a key part of the province's continued growth and success relies on the health and longevity of Ontario's agricultural sector. Ontario is home to world class farmland that produces \$47 billion in annual GDP, \$20 billion in agri-food exports and more than 750,000 jobs. Most of the land responsible for that productivity is in areas threatened by urban sprawl. Without thoughtful development and sustainable solutions, we could see farmland continue to disappear forever. We need to work towards a plan to sustain and grow the vibrant agricultural sector in the greenbelt area and across Ontario.

OFA urges the provincial government to implement changes to build more homes faster that reflect that growth management to meet housing demand and farmland protection are two sides of the same coin. More robust protection against development on agricultural land combined with fixed, permanent urban boundaries and mandatory compliance with urban density and intensification requirements will achieve community development and farmland protection objectives.

OFA appreciates the opportunity to provide our feedback and agricultural perspectives on the Greenbelt policies and regulations. We look forward to working with the provincial government and our municipal counterparts to sustain our province's housing supply and communities while protecting our agricultural land base and supporting our agri-food sector as an economic powerhouse.

Sincerely,



Drew Spoelstra  
President, OFA

cc: Hon. Lisa Thompson, Minister, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs  
OFA Board of Directors