



November 27, 2019

Hon. Steve Clark
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Government of Ontario
17th Floor, 777 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Clark,

Re: *Line Fences Repeal Act, 2019*

On behalf of the Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO) I am writing to you today to raise our concerns in response to Schedule 2, the Line Fences Repeal Act, 2019 of Bill 132, Better for People, Smarter for Business Act, 2019. BFO represents 19,000 beef farmers across Ontario by advocating in the areas of policy planning, industry development and research, environment, sustainability, animal health and welfare, and domestic and export market development.

Line fences are an essential component of livestock farming. As such, there would be continued value in maintaining the mechanism within the current Line Fences Act that provides a framework and adjudication method for municipalities, particularly those in rural Ontario, to help resolve disputes between abutting property owners over cost-sharing of construction, maintenance, or repairs to property line fences. Under the Line Fences Act, municipally-appointed "fence-viewers" attend the site, hear from both parties, and then make a decision and assign each party a specified portion of the fence to build or maintain.

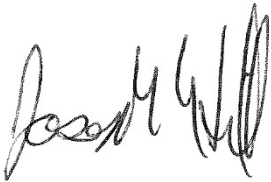
Rural agricultural property owners are frequent users of the current adjudication process and guidance that is provided under the Act. Our concern with the proposed repeal is that local, mainly rural municipalities will be forced to create new by-laws to replace the dispute resolution mechanism already provided under the existing Act. In our opinion that this would create unnecessary burden and downloading from the province without providing any benefit to property owners engaged in line fence disputes. Furthermore, the Line Fences Repeal Act, 2019 does not require municipalities to create such by-laws, which in effect may create a gap for many rural property owners that are left without any guideline or framework to help resolve disputes between neighbours, outside of the traditional court system. The current proposal to simply repeal the Act without a replacement mechanism to resolve line fence



disputes is not something BFO supports. The Line Fences Act is not viewed by BFO as red tape rather as a necessary statute that allows our members to protect their rights as property owners.

BFO would appreciate the opportunity to discuss our concerns further and/or to appear as a witness if this portion of Bill 132 moves to Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Hill". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Joe Hill
President

cc: Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria, Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction
BFO Board of Directors

