The Honourable Dalton McGuinty Legislative Building Room 281 Queen's Park Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A1

## Dear Premier McGuinty,

We, the undersigned, would like to voice our deep concern about Bill 55, the *Strong Action for Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2012* and to request that you withdraw all schedules amending environmental legislation from the bill. Bill 55 obstructs the public's right to participate in environmental decision-making by circumventing the statutory process for public consultation that is normally guaranteed under the *Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993*. In so doing it erodes government accountability, transparency and environmental responsibility.

Bill 55 makes substantial changes to several environmental laws, including the *Endangered Species Act, 2007*, the *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006*, the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act, 1994*, the *Public Lands Act* and the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997*. A legal analysis conducted by Ecojustice and the Canadian Environmental Law Association reveals that Bill 55 significantly undermines the level of environmental protection and public oversight of natural resource use and conservation by: exempting industrial and development activities from legal requirements to protect wildlife and natural resources; broadening exemption powers; allowing the delegation of government authority to other unspecified bodies; and extending or eliminating deadlines for planning and reporting (e.g., species recovery strategies, park management plans, reports to the Legislature).

The weakening of environmental laws that were designed to protect the health of our lakes, forests and wildlife is deeply disturbing. To do so by circumventing the requirements of the *Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993* through omnibus legislation that denies the possibility for open public debate is very troubling. We thus fully support the recommendation of Ecojustice and the Canadian Environmental Law Association, "that the environmental statutes, particularly those related to species protection, sustainable forest operations, protected areas, lakes and rivers protection, and public lands be withdrawn from the Schedules of Bill 55." Specifically, we request the removal of Schedules15, 19, 23, 34, 58 and 59.

In closing, we would like to assert our collective opposition to environmental deregulation and our profound disappointment in the government's approach to addressing its budgetary objectives.

Yours truly,

Bruce Cox Executive Director Greenpeace

GREENPEACE

Cambie Schultz

Caroline Schultz Executive Director Ontario Nature



Dr. Faisal Moola, Ph.D.
Director General, Ontario
and Northern Canada
David Suzuki Foundation



Farah Khan
Campaigner
Canadian Association of Physicians for
the Environment

Your Khan

Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment

Theresa McClenaghan
Executive Director and Counsel
Canadian Environmental Law
Association



John McDonnell
Executive Director
Canadian Parks and
Wilderness Society –
Ottawa Valley Chapter



David Browne, Ph.D.
Director of Conservation
Canadian Wildlife Federation



Your connection to wildlife Votre lien avec la faune Alexander

Amber Ellis Executive Director Earthroots

EARTHROOTS

Meredith Cochrane Executive Director EcoSpark



Charlene Rosus.

**Charlene Rogers** President **Environment North** 



Dr. Rick Smith

**Executive Director Environmental Defence** 



**Terry Rees Executive Director** Federation of Ontario **Cottagers Association** 



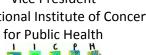
Duk R Street

Derek Stack **Executive Director Great Lakes United** 



Anna Tilum

Anna Tilman Vice President International Institute of Concern for Public Health





Ramsey Hart Canada Program Coordinator MiningWatch Canada



Ian J. Davidson **Executive Director** Nature Canada



Brennain Lloyd



**Project Coordinator** 

Michael F. Giza President **Ontario Streams** 



Toni Ellis President **Ontario Urban Forest Council** 



**Graham Ketcheson Executive Director** 



Dann Dunott Dan McDermott Sierra Club of Canada, **Ontario Chapter** 



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Kyle A. Clarke
President
The Council of Outdoor Educators of
Ontario



Derek Coronado Coordinator Citizens Environment Alliance of Southwestern Ontario





GABP Grey Association for Better Planning

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Janet McKay
Executive Director
LEAF (Local Enhancement and
Appreciation of Forests)

Jim Mahon

Environment Committee,
Chairperson
London and District Labour
Council



Len Elliot President OPSEU Local 101

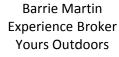








Franz Hartmann, PhD
Executive Director
Toronto Environmental Alliance







Betty Coutu President Bancroft Field Naturalists



Ton Crest

Tom Wilson President Carden Field Naturalists



Otto Peter President Durham Field Naturalists

Jim Johnston

Jim Johnston President Friends of Algoma East

Bill Lamond

Bill Lamond
Past-President
Hamilton Naturalists' Club

Sharm Twett

Sharon Lovett Co-Chair High Park Nature Sheila Fleming

Sheila Fleming
President
Ingersoll District Nature
Club

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Bernie Solymar Co-Chair Nature's Calling Environmental Education

Ester Read

Peter Read
President
Nature London

Joyce Sankey

Joyce Sankey
Past-President
Niagara Falls Nature Club

Ann Mar flenie

Ann MacKenzie
President
Ottawa Field Naturalists' Club

Spian

Stewart Nutt
President
Owen Sound Field Naturalists

Glanda Clayte

Glenda Clayton
President
Parry Sound Nature Club

John W. Patter Press, Peninsula Field Nats

John W. Potter
President
Peninsula Field Naturalists

Myrna Wood Myrna Wood

Board Member
Prince Edward County Field
Naturalists

Searge Whomson
George Thomson
President

Quinte Field Naturalists

Stephen Francish

Stephen Ferensik
Chair
Sarnia Urban Wildlife Committee

Juld

Jerrold Asling
President
Saugeen Field Naturalists

Marilyn Ohler

Marilyn Ohler Board Member Stratford Field Naturalists

Dianne Pazaratz

Dianne Pazaratz

Board Member

Thickson's Woods Land Trust

Brin Wymn

Dr. Brian McLaren President Thunder Bay Field Naturalists

Robert Kortwright
President
Toronto Field Naturalists

R. Korfoight

R. Miles

Ray Metcalfe President Upper Ottawa Valley Nature Club Sylvia Bowman

Sylvia Bowman
Board Member
York Region Environmental
Alliance

John

Thomas Smith
President
Muskoka Field Naturalists

Sylvia Bowman
Conservation Director
York-Simcoe Naturalists

Timothy Sobey
President
Lakehead Student Chapter of the
Wildlife Society

Norman Wingrove
President
Blue Mountain Watershed
Trust Foundation

Janet Bremner
President
Lambton Wildlife Inc.

Janet Brenner

cc. The Honourable Dwight Duncan, Minister of Finance
The Honourable Michael Gravelle, Minister of Natural Resources
Andrea Horwath, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Ontario
Tim Hudak, Leader of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party