



LONG-TERM THINKING FOR TODAY'S ISSUES

March 2, 2023

Bobbi Ann Brady, MPP
Haldimand-Norfolk
50B Gilbertson Dr.
PO Box 91
Simcoe, ON N3Y 4K8
Via email: babrady-co@ola.org

Re: Private Members Bill 62 the “Farmland and Arable Land Strategy Act, 2023”

Dear Ms. Brady,

The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) is an Accredited Farm Organization representing the interests of over 4,000 farm families in Ontario who are called to the vocation of farming. CFFO policy promotes economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable farming, advocating that farmers receive fair return for their production and stewardship efforts.

We are writing to indicate our support for your Private Member’s Bill 62, “An Act to provide for the development of a farmland and arable land strategy and an advisory committee on farmland and arable land.” This Bill addresses the urgent need to protect farmland in Ontario in a context of increasing development pressure and farmland loss. If passed, this Bill will require that the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs develop a strategic action plan to protect farmland and arable land from threats, including development and aggregate mining. The Bill also establishes a Farmland and Arable Land Advisory Committee to provide recommendations to the Minister.

The CFFO strongly supports the benefits of a strategy to protect farmland across Ontario. The requirement for consultation as part of the strategy development will ensure it is relevant and will be effective. The CFFO also supports the proposed advisory committee as beneficial to ensure preservation of farmland for the benefit of Ontarians now and into the future.

Ontario’s farmland is the foundation of the significant economic contributions of our overall agri-food sector. The sector has proven to be resilient and agile in adjusting to significant challenges and new opportunities. It will continue to be important to a strong Ontario economy far into the future – but only if our agricultural land base is protected.

Farmland also provides many important environmental goods and services including flood risk mitigation and wildlife habitat. Farmland and neighbouring natural features together ensure greater environmental benefits and corridors for wildlife and water through the landscape.

Productive farmland is vital to our food security, here in Ontario and globally. Recent disruptions to supply chains and global food systems demonstrate the value of food-producing land, especially close

to home. All these benefits clearly illustrate the need to protect our productive farmland from degradation and permanent loss.

We hope that MPPs in all parties will see the value of supporting this proposed Bill 62 “Farmland and Arable Land Strategy Act, 2023” as a way to support farmers, our agricultural sector, and greater food security here in Ontario and around the world. Agriculture is an industry vital to our food supply, health, and economic prosperity.

Thank you for your support for farmers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Scharringa', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ed Scharringa, President
Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario

CC: Hon. Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs