

Ministry of Community Safety
and Correctional Services

Ministère de la Sécurité communautaire
et des Services correctionnels

Office of the Minister

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MC-2018-1124

May 8, 2018

Mr. Eli El-Chantiry
Chair
Ontario Association of Police Services Boards
180 Simcoe Street
London ON N6B 1H9

Dear Mr. El-Chantiry:

I am pleased to share with you that Bill 175, the *Safer Ontario Act, 2018*, received Royal Assent on March 8, 2018.

The *Safer Ontario Act, 2018*, repeals and replaces Ontario's *Police Services Act*, amends the *Coroners Act*, and creates, for the first time, the *Missing Persons Act, 2018*, and the *Forensic Laboratories Act, 2018*. It also creates new legislation related to the oversight of police, including the *Police Oversight Act, 2018*, the *Ontario Policing Discipline Tribunal Act, 2018*, and the *Ontario Special Investigations Unit Act, 2018*. These statutes fall under the purview of the Ministry of the Attorney General.

Passing this legislation is a momentous step for our government. It represents the first comprehensive review of the *Police Services Act* since 1990 and the largest policing transformation in a generation. The changes support our goal to build a proactive, sustainable and effective model of policing in Ontario.

The *Police Services Act, 2018*, will modernize our approach to community safety by mandating municipalities to undertake local community safety and well-being planning, improve police oversight, transparency and accountability, enhance civilian governance and respond to the needs and realities of Ontario's diverse communities.

The majority of provisions in the *Police Services Act, 2018*, will come into force on January 1, 2020. Sections 32 and 77 of the Act, related to constituting First Nation police service boards, will come into force on January 1, 2019. Until this time, the current legislative framework of the *Police Services Act* remains in force.

I want to thank the Ontario Association of Police Services Boards for advocating on behalf of your members and for recommending changes to help achieve our shared goal of a safer Ontario. I am pleased that we were able to work together to address some of the issues you previously raised and included in your submission to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

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Recognizing that police service boards play an important role in establishing policies governing police in their communities, we amended the legislation to enable boards to make policies with respect to the deployment of members of the police service while being prohibited from developing policies or providing direction on the conduct of specific operations or specific investigations. This authority will support police service boards in providing strong and consistent civilian governance over policing in local communities and across the province.

In response to your position on collective agreement negotiations, an amendment was made to enable legal counsel and advisors to the bargaining committee and to the police service board to conduct bargaining sessions on behalf of the bargaining committee and police service board. This amendment will provide police service boards and bargaining committees increased flexibility and choice in relation to who participates and conducts bargaining sessions.

Additionally, to enhance good governance and accountability, board members will be required to complete training associated with governance before they exercise their board responsibilities. Board members will also be required to complete training that promotes and recognizes the diverse, multiracial and multicultural character of Ontario society, and the rights and cultures of First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples.

I look forward to working together to develop the regulations required to bring these changes into effect and continuing our dialogue to ensure that Ontario's approach to policing aligns with community needs.

Thank you again for your support and ongoing efforts to build safer, stronger communities in Ontario.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "M. Lalonde".

Marie-France Lalonde
Minister