

February 11, 2019

The Honorable Caroline Mulroney  
Ministry of the Attorney General  
McMurtry-Scott Building, 720 Bay Street  
Toronto, ON M7A 2S9  
[Caroline.mulroney@pc.ola.org](mailto:Caroline.mulroney@pc.ola.org)

Dear Minister Mulroney:

**Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017 and Cannabis legislation**

On behalf of our board of health, I am writing you in support of Peterborough Public Health's (PPH) call to action and shared concern regarding funding associated with the cannabis legislation and the introduction of the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act 2017*.

The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit (WECHU) applauds the ministry on the modernization of smoking regulations in Ontario and welcomes the additional restrictions outlined in the new legislation due to their alignment with local and regional goals related to reducing places of use for harmful products. The consequences however, of the inclusion of electronic cigarette-use and the smoking of cannabis as prohibited products in prescribed places involve the added responsibility of public health tobacco enforcement officers in enforcing these regulations. In addition, the transfer of responsibility from the province to local public health units related to the oversight of tobacconist and specialty vape store authorizations represents an additional burden on administrative and enforcement resources.

Although boards of health were permitted to submit for reimbursement of costs incurred due to the legalization of cannabis, through a one-time grant application process in which the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit requested \$197,392, there are concerns about the ability to ensure effective enforcement and oversight over the long-term without sustained resources dedicated to enforcement, administration, and public education. To date, no such resources have been received by the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit and there is no guarantee that resources allocated to municipalities to assist with the costs associated with cannabis legalization will be redistributed to public health agencies.

With the introduction of a sustained and dedicated funding model to account for the additional responsibilities introduced through the Smoke-free Ontario Act 2017, as well as those associated with cannabis legalization, public health units across Ontario will be able to efficiently and effectively enforce and provide oversight over these new requirements. Without these supplementary resources, WECHU has significant and legitimate concerns related to its ability to maintain existing programming when these new requirements are taken into account.

The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit thanks you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Gary McNamara  
Chair, Board of Health



Theresa Marentette, RN, MSc  
Chief Executive Officer, Chief Nursing Officer

<https://www.wechu.org/board-meetings/january-2019-board-meeting>

Encl. Peterborough Public Health – Letter to Hon. Caroline Mulroney – Nov 2018

c: The Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario  
The Hon. Christine Elliott, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, Deputy Premier  
Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aLPHa)  
Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)  
Ontario Boards of Health  
Local Municipal Councils  
Windsor-Essex MPPs  
Windsor-Essex Board of Health