



City of Hamilton

Report for Information

To: Mayor and Members
Audit, Finance and Administration Committee

Date: May 7, 2026

Report No: HUR26008

Subject/Title: Elect Respect (Outstanding Business List)

Ward(s) Affected: City Wide

Recommendations

1. That Report HUR26008 respecting Elect Respect **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Key Facts

- This information report is in response to an Outstanding Business List Item from the December 4, 2025, Audit, Finance and Administration Sub-Committee Meeting directing staff to report back with information on the Elect Respect Pledge.
- Subsequent to that, a further motion was passed at the December 10, 2025, Council Meeting in which Council called on elected officials, organizations and community members to support the Elect Respect campaign and to sign the online pledge.

Background

On December 4, 2025, Council directed staff to report back to the Audit, Finance and Administration Committee with information about the Elect Respect Pledge, including information about who has signed the pledge and what it means.

On December 10, 2025, Council made a resolution as follows:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

(a) That Hamilton City Council supports the Elect Respect pledge and commits to:

- Treat others with respect in all spaces—public, private, and online,
- Reject and call out harassment, abuse, and personal attacks,
- Focus debate on ideas and policies, not personal attacks,
- Help build a supportive culture where people of all backgrounds feel safe to run for and hold office,
- Call on relevant authorities to ensure the protection of elected officials who face abuse or threats, and
- Model integrity and respect by holding one another to the highest standards of conduct.

(b) That Hamilton City Council calls on elected officials, organizations and community members to support the Elect Respect campaign and sign the online pledge at www.electrespect.ca; and

(c) That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Ontario's Big City Mayors, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Office of the Mayor of Burlington, relevant MPs and MPPs, Regional Police, the Ontario Provincial Police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

The origins of the Elect Respect campaign came from a small group of women in Halton known as the Halton Elected Representatives (HER) The group shared their own

experiences dealing with harassment and abuse in public life and were seeking a way of standing up to address these issues and develop a better way forward. This resulted in the creation of Elect Respect. It is a commitment to “uphold core values of democratic service which includes the right to work free from threats, abuse of intimidation.”

As of March 26, 2026, a total of 54 municipalities have signed the Elect Respect Pledge, including the City of Hamilton. A complete list can be found at Appendix A.

Analysis

Municipalities and individual signatories demonstrate their renewed commitment to a respectful public service. The pledge is as follows:

As an ally to candidates and elected officials, and an advocate for democracy, I pledge to:

- Treat elected officials and each other with respect in all spaces - public, private, and online.
- Reject harassment, abuse, and personal attacks, and speak out when I witness them.
- Focus debate and political discussions on ideas and policies, not personal attacks.
- Help build a supportive culture where people of all backgrounds feel safe to run for and hold office and engage in public life.
- Call on relevant authorities for the protection of elected officials who face abuse or threats.
- Model integrity and respect in public life, holding myself to the highest standards of conduct, and vote for leaders who model integrity and respect in public life, holding *them* to the highest standard of conduct.

Signing the pledge reinforces the expectations of behaviours for Elected Officials, citizens and staff and is in keeping with the City of Hamilton’s own Corporate Culture Pillars, Codes of Conduct and Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

This report reinforces our Council Strategic Priority of Responsiveness and Transparency by building a high performing public service. A respectful environment is a critical component of a high performing public service which encourages and enables diverse voices, opinions, and perspectives to be heard and valued to achieve optimal outcomes for our communities.

Consultation

Not Applicable.

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix A: List of Municipalities

Prepared by:

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Submitted and Recommended by:

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