



TOM MRAKAS
MAYOR

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MAYOR MRAKAS' STATEMENT ON PROVINCIAL BILLS 5 AND 17 AND SPECIAL COUNCILLORS MEETING ON JULY 15

"As Mayor of Aurora and a member of the AMO Board, I want to offer some perspective on Bills 5 and 17. These are substantial and complex pieces of legislation. While there are certainly elements within each bill that raise legitimate concerns—particularly regarding municipal autonomy and long-term fiscal sustainability—there are also parts that, if implemented collaboratively and thoughtfully, could offer real benefits for Ontario's communities.

That's why many municipalities have taken a measured, "wait and see" approach, rather than opposing the bills outright. There's good reason for this. AMO has clearly stated that while some aspects of the legislation require clarification and adjustment, other proposals—like Development Charge modernization in Bill 17 and Special Economic Zones in Bill 5—could help drive local economic growth if municipalities are full partners in the process.

The reality is, these are framework bills, not finished products. The regulations that will define their real-world impacts have not yet been released. Even our municipal staff do not fully know what the implications will be. Unlike more straightforward bills—such as the reversal of tribunal rules—Bills 5 and 17 are layered, far-reaching, and depend heavily on how the regulations are written. Anyone claiming to know exactly how these will play out is not being truthful—because even the Province has acknowledged those details are still in development.

As a member of the AMO Board—representing 444 municipalities across Ontario—I believe it is premature and irresponsible to oppose these bills in their entirety before understanding the full regulatory framework. AMO's position is clear: if the Province works with municipalities, many of the potential risks can be mitigated. Acting in opposition now, before those opportunities to collaborate have been exhausted, risks losing influence over how the final regulations are shaped.

I remain hopeful that through open, ongoing dialogue with the Province, and by continuing to advocate for practical, transparent, and community-focused regulations, we can shape outcomes that work for everyone. In the meantime, I will not support motions that call for opposing both bills in their entirety. I believe the more responsible and constructive course of action is for our Town to stand with AMO and support their detailed, thoughtful submissions. I will continue to monitor developments closely, work collaboratively with our municipal partners and AMO, and respond in a way that is informed, balanced, and focused on outcomes. That is what leadership requires."

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