



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 9, 2016

Municipalities need relief from joint and several liability: Pettapiece

(Queen's Park) – Perth-Wellington MPP Randy Pettapiece has once again taken the Liberal government to task for its lack of action on joint and several liability reform. During today's question period, Pettapiece asked Attorney General Madeleine Meilleur why she turned her back on municipalities.

"Two years ago, I introduced a private member's resolution to reform joint and several liability for municipalities. My motion received unanimous consent from MPPs of all parties – even Liberals," said Pettapiece during question period. "Yet here we stand, over two years later, and the government has done absolutely nothing."

Pettapiece pointed to a case in the minister's own home city of Ottawa. In 2008, a drunk driver ran a red light and slammed into a city bus, which tragically resulted in three deaths in the passenger vehicle.

But the court found the bus driver partially responsible. He was travelling six kilometers above the speed limit, and was checking his mirrors when he approached the intersection.

The City of Ottawa and its taxpayers are now on the hook for \$2 million in damages.

To Pettapiece, this is another example of the serious impacts that the joint and several liability system can have on municipalities when they are found financially liable far beyond their legal responsibility.

"If other provinces and states can make sensible reforms to their systems, what's stopping Ontario?" asked Pettapiece.

The Attorney General claimed that during the consultation period, there was no support for reform – "except from the insurance companies and some of the municipalities."

Her response left Pettapiece shaking his head. "We know from documents we requested from the Attorney General's own office that the government only sought input from trial lawyers. They didn't even bother to contact insurers, municipalities and taxpayers."

Pettapiece continued: "For the minister to claim that there was no support for reform – except from the most important stakeholders on the issue, including over 200 municipalities – is ridiculous."

In February 2014, Pettapiece introduced a private member's motion calling on the government to reform the joint and several liability model. His motion won statements of support from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Insurance Bureau of Canada, insurance brokers, and over 210 municipalities across Ontario. However, at the August 2014 AMO conference, the government announced it would not move forward despite years of promises.

- 30 -

Video of Question: <http://pettapiece.ca/?p=3774>

Randy Pettapiece, MPP | 416-325-3400 | www.pettapiece.ca