



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 1, 2018

## Pettapiece speaks on Arthur fire, again urges passage of Rea and Walter Act

(Queen's Park) – Perth-Wellington MPP Randy Pettapiece spoke today in the Ontario legislature about a fire that broke out July 21 at Tim Hortons in Arthur. Although there was no loss of life, the outcome could have been far worse. Firefighters were initially unaware that the building used truss and lightweight construction.

In April 2017, Pettapiece introduced and debated the Rea and Walter Act, which would require truss and lightweight construction to be identified on most commercial and industrial buildings. Despite unanimous support from all parties, the bill died when the previous Liberal government failed to act on it.

The Rea and Walter Act is named in memory of two North Perth Fire Service members, Ken Rea and Ray Walter, who died battling a fire in March 2011.

The following is the text of Pettapiece's remarks:

*July 21st was no ordinary Sunday afternoon at the Arthur Tim Hortons. Employees discovered fire, and 30 firefighters soon arrived at the scene.*

*No one was injured. Wellington North Fire Service Fire Chief Dave Guilbault was quoted: "Staff did an excellent job, followed all procedures, got everybody out."*

*But this was no simple fire. Chief Guilbault wrote to me: "The fire started in the ceiling cavity. It had been burning for some time before staff noticed smoke. The occupants were totally unaware the fire was burning above their heads!"*

*At first, firefighters could not have known the building was made of truss and lightweight construction.*

*Chief Guilbault explains: "Our firefighters did an excellent job of containing and extinguishing the fire, however we believe we were within moments of roof collapse. We were not aware that the roof trusses were lightweight. There was no way of knowing. There could have been serious injuries or loss of life."*

*Here's the point, Speaker. Firefighters need to know which buildings contain truss and lightweight construction. When fire breaks out, they need to know how to attack it safely. And they need us to pass the Rea and Walter Act, which would clearly identify affected buildings.*

*My private member's bill passed second reading unanimously, but the previous government didn't follow through. I look forward to discussing this lifesaving legislation with our new Minister of Community Safety.*

*Thank you, Mr. Speaker.*

- 30 -