

CORPORATION OF THE UNITED TOWNSHIPS OF HEAD, CLARA & MARIA

Date: Friday, March 27, 2009

Resolution No.: _____

Moved by: _____ Seconded by: _____

WHEREAS The Corporation of the Township of Madawaska Valley circulated a resolution in request of support for increased Homecare funding as follows;

AND WHEREAS Homecare is an essential service in rural Ontario in assisting in the well-being of aging seniors and residents battling disabling diseases in their primary or secondary residences;

AND WHEREAS Homecare responds to the needs of patients and assists parents, spouses, children and siblings and the broader community by supporting quality of life and ensuring quality care so that citizens can continue to participate in and contribute to the economic and social life of their community;

AND WHEREAS Homecare is a viable alternative to Long-Term Care and Residential Housing;

AND WHEREAS rural residents within the County of Renfrew are limited to few spaces within the Long-Term Care Homes in the area;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Corporation of the United Townships of Head, Clara & Maria supports the Council of Madawaska Valley in requesting that the County of Renfrew lobby the Provincial Government on behalf of all rural municipalities to ensure an increase to Homecare Access Programs including increased funding, support and assistance;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this resolution be forwarded to the Premier of Ontario, our local MPP, the Ministry of Community & Social Services and the Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care and the Township of Madawaska Valley.

Carried _____ Defeated _____ Reeve _____

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WHEREAS a Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation, (SLAPP) is where a corporation or developer sues an organization in an attempt to scare it into dropping protests against a corporate initiative.

AND WHEREAS SLAPP suits typically involve the environment--for example, local residents who are petitioning to change zoning laws to prevent a real estate development might be sued in a SLAPP suit for interference with the developer's business interests.

AND WHEREAS many jurisdictions have "anti-SLAPP suit" statutes that protect citizens' rights to free speech and to petition the government.

AND WHEREAS Andrea Horwath, Ontario's NDP Critic for Municipal Affairs, has introduced a private members bill to counter Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPP) used by proponents to silence those who object to their developments;

AND WHEREAS with the passage of this bill, the well-heeled industrial interests suing citizens to silence public objections; while bulldozing projects through municipal councils and the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), will be a thing of the past;

AND WHEREAS Horwath's Bill 138, *Protection of Public Participation Act, 2008* would enable such lawsuits to be dismissed at an early stage and would indemnify defendants for costs incurred and allow additional costs for damages to be awarded to them by a court or tribunal.

AND WHEREAS a significant mechanism in Horwath's Bill would stop governments and tribunals from proceeding with the planning process where SLAPP tactics exist;

AND WHEREAS The recent Uniform Law Conference, a yearly gathering of provincial Attorneys General, identified SLAPPs as a growing and worrisome trend across Canada and specifically identified the ongoing Big Bay Point OMB cost application, as a case in point;

AND WHEREAS Dr. Rick Smith, Executive Director, and lawyer, David Donnelly, himself the target of such a lawsuit, says a law protecting public participation is very much needed. "Surely it's Job 1 of the Ontario legislature to ensure that Ontarians can engage with our democracy -- including provincial courts and tribunals -- without fear of intimidation by bullying developers or crippling financial liability," Smith said. "Unless the current system is changed, I am very concerned that citizens will increasingly shy away from speaking their mind publicly and our public life, urban planning regimes and environmental protection will be the poorer for it.";

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Corporation of the United Townships of Head, Clara & Maria supports the City of Hamilton and Ms. Horwath in their efforts with respect to the current Bill 138 – *Protection of Public Participation Act, 2008*.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be forwarded to the Premier of Ontario, our local MPP and the City of Hamilton.

Carried _____ Defeated _____ Reeve _____