
Proposal Response:

Special Economic Zones Act, 2025

ERO #: 025-0391

Parks and Recreation Ontario Submission
May 15, 2025

About us

Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO) is a non-profit association with over 7,000 members from across the province, including post-secondary students, municipal staff, community agencies, and independent operators. Our work includes policy, research, education, training, and professional development opportunities, as well as our flagship quality standards program, HIGH FIVE®.

PRO appreciates intentions to expedite housing and other development projects. Ontario *does* need more homes, and legislative changes *are* an important tool to accelerate building. However, housing, and other development projects should not come at the expense of municipal jurisdiction, environmental protection, biodiversity, Indigenous consultation, and public input. Therefore, we must express our opposition to Bill 5, Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025, and particularly the Special Economic Zones Act, 2025.

Ontario *needs* more homes, and we are in support of legislative changes that promote economic growth. However, legislation that protects Ontario's species and ecosystems, instructs Indigenous consultation, and requires public consultation should not be considered 'red tape'. Rather, these legislative tools provide necessary check and balances to ensure development projects are conducted in a responsible manner that is in the best interest of Ontario's citizens and ecosystems.

Local governments must be included in major development projects impacting the communities they serve. Indeed, municipalities and Indigenous communities carry deep local knowledge about what is best for their communities. Rather than overriding local jurisdiction, the people of Ontario would be better served through increased inter-governmental collaboration that collectively works to support economic-growth, healthier communities, and environmental sustainability.

PRO would be pleased to openly dialogue with the Ministry regarding the Special Economic Zones Act, 2025, and discuss our comments further, should any clarity be required.

For more information, please contact:

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