

EX8.1.33

THE SENATE OF CANADA



LE SÉNAT DU CANADA

Ottawa Ontario
K1A 0A4

By Email

July 26, 2011

His Worship Mayor Ford and Toronto City Councillors
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor Ford and City Councillors,

I will start with praise before registering my concerns. I applaud efforts to put the City's finances in good order. As a former City Budget Chief (1973-1980), and President of the Treasury Board of Canada (1993-1995), I appreciate the need to do so. There appears to be a structural shortfall (currently reported at \$774 Million) that keeps being moved from one year to another with short term measures but without permanent resolution. That should not continue.

Making programs and services more efficient and effective is also welcome, and that should help in reducing costs and better serving public needs. However, cuts that could be detrimental to the quality of life that our City has come to enjoy would not be welcome.

Your consultant, KPMG, has identified some possible cuts that I believe are in that category. I am particularly concerned about reducing or eliminating programs or services affecting some of the most vulnerable people in our City - the poor, the elderly, racial minorities, the disabled, and at risk youth, to name a few. Programs such as nutritious meals for low income children, child care, dental health for the poor, libraries, affordable housing, and grants to service providers are in that category.

Recent reports are instructive in this regard. Both the Conference Board of Canada and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives have demonstrated a widening gap between the rich and the poor. Professor David Hulchanski at the University of Toronto writes about Toronto being made up of three components - the rich, the dwindling middle class, and increasing low income neighbourhoods. The United Way describes the concentration of poverty in high rise apartments. All of these reports point to an increasing threat to the social fabric and social cohesion of our city. We can't afford to abandon the vulnerable in our society. We will pay a lot more in the long run if we do.

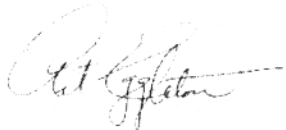
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One more comment. Much has been written about the world class status of Toronto. There are many components to that reputation. The safety, cleanliness, and liveability of our City. The arts and cultural life, our education systems, our parks and ravines, our distinct neighbourhoods, how we treat our most vulnerable citizens, to name a few. All these components are important for attracting investment and people coming to Toronto as tourists and new residents bringing new talents, ideas, and creativity. We can't afford to lose the synergy that comes from all of these characteristics. We can't afford Toronto going from world class to mediocrity.

What I respectfully ask you to do is to be careful about reductions to programs and services that could affect our quality of life in Toronto. The KPMG report does not look at the long term implications of some of their cut options. You need to do that. Cutting staff by attrition or layoffs can also have devastating effects on programs and services. The public needs to know what the trade offs are in this exercise and be given adequate opportunity to register their opinions on the details. As is often said: 'the devil is in the details'.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Eggleton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.