



**THE ANNEX
RESIDENTS'
ASSOCIATION**

PO Box 19057, RPO Walmer
Toronto, ON M5S 3C9
theara.org

His Worship John Tory
Mayor, City of Toronto
100 Queen St. W.
City Hall, Second floor

November 28, 2022

Re: Ontario Bill 39 – Better Municipal Governance Act, 2022

Yet again we find ourselves writing to defend democracy in our city.

Bill 39 is an unprecedented and scandalous attack on the foundations of our system of government. Democracy is based on free expression and majority rule. But as it is presently drafted, **this Bill is a blatant attack on one of our most basic freedoms.**

Mayor Tory, you were fairly elected with a majority of votes. But you won those votes without disclosing your negotiations with Premier Ford to overthrow the democratic principle in Council. Why did you fail to disclose this nefarious deal? Were you fearful you might lose the election if you had?

You argue that we citizens should be trusting because you will only use this “super power” rarely and then for good. But what real assurances do we have? Why should we trust you when you suppressed the terms of this Bill before you were elected?

Now it appears that Toronto City Council will not be able to debate Bill 39 before it is proclaimed. You've failed to give councillors a forum for discussion. Why are you enabling the suppression of our councillors' voices even before you are officially invested with these powers?

You speak only about your own use of this undemocratic power, ignoring completely the fact that it is vested not in you as a person but in your role as mayor. You are implicitly asking us to believe that future mayors will also be trustworthy. What checks will there be on all future mayors' decisions?

The voices objecting to this Bill have been immediate, loud and voluminous. Voters, interest groups, columnists, pundits, editors, academics and politicians – including our former mayors – have articulated powerful objections to this Bill. Is this the legacy for which you choose to be remembered?

All this analysis leads to one conclusion – that you must repudiate the mayoral powers granted in this Bill. But if you won't listen to these voices, at the very least we ask that you to listen to your own Council. Anything less than calling an immediate and urgent meeting to debate this Bill is both unacceptable and unforgivable.

Sincerely,

Rita Bilerman
Chair, Annex Residents' Association

Copy to: Members of Toronto City Council