

GREENBERG CONSULTANTS INC.

January 15, 2025

To: The City of Toronto Executive Committee

RE: Executive Council meeting 28 January 2025

Member Motion MM24-15

Toward Municipal Autonomy and Effective Local Governance

Referred to Committee from City Council meeting December 2024

Dear Committee Members:

I'm writing to urge you to support the above motion.

The past few years have demonstrated clearly that the dysfunctional relationship between the city of Toronto and the provincial government is not working in the best interests of Toronto residents. The lack of autonomy and the ability to make local decisions through a politically accountable body is not normal for a major city and it is having highly negative consequences. The BNA Act of 1867 written at a time when 80% of the population lived in rural areas and Canada's cities were designated to be "creatures of the province" disenfranchising cities has continued to haunt us.

The current provincial government (and previous ones, to be fair) have consistently demonstrated no qualms about interfering in and dictating the terms for what should properly be areas of city jurisdiction: city planning; how we plan and pay for local transit; how we pay for infrastructure and costs arising from development; the basic makeup of our democratic institutions. The recent decisions to remove bike lanes and shut down safe injection sites, both built by the city for the safety of its own residents is just the latest example of provincial overreach. It all demonstrates that our city of three million residents has insufficient power and money to properly serve the public good.

Even when the province is not engaged in this kind of direct interference, the city of Toronto has no authority over local matters that cannot be overturned by the province. We are constantly having to seek provincial permission to do the simplest of things which other cities in the world take for granted they can just do on their own.

You are not being asked with this motion to back a City Charter or any other specific solution to this problem. You are merely being asked to create a citizens' advisory board to look into the matter.

Your yes vote will indicate willingness to hear what the public has to say on this important issue. A no vote will indicate that you are so completely happy with the status quo that you don't even see the need to look into it.

Please approve the motion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Greenberg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K" and "G".

Ken Greenberg
Principal