



Special Ontario Edition

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Greetings!

CPBH volunteers have already been very busy in 2019 concerning developments in Ontario. Here's a quick update for you. **Are you a sleuth?** We are saving the best for last today, so keep reading and **don't miss your chance to unravel the mystery.**



On January 30, 2019 we met with the new Attorney General, Minister Caroline Mulroney. We raised the ongoing **serious issues concerning the License Appeal Tribunal (LAT)**: ongoing operational issues, lack of fairness, and its inability to enforce its own orders. As discussed, our annual analyses for over a decade have found that homeowners lose about 85% of the time at the LAT. This is statistically impossible. Here is a link to our most recent analysis <https://tinyurl.com/y96z8ury> .

We also raised the issue of **white-collar crime**, that is, when homeowners find that they are "stuck" with Ontario Building Code violations that are not properly addressed by the builder or Tarion. As you may know, the Ontario Building Code (OBC) is focused on health and safety. One Chief Building Official said that all building code violations are serious. Attorney General Mulroney asked good questions during the meeting. We are now waiting to hear what she is going to do about these issues.



Also on January 30, 2019, **CPBH volunteers met with the new minister responsible for Tarion**, Minister Bill Walker. Two homeowners joined us at the meeting to provide a first-hand account of what they are facing as a result of a home riddled with OBC violations, and Tarion's continued stalling. Minister Walker said he found the meeting helpful.



On January 31, 2019, CPBH President **Dr. Karen Somerville attended Minister Steve Clark's (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing) Housing Supply Action Plan – Minister's Forum**. It was a productive day, with Karen's input focusing in on **the need for all newly built homes to start to meet the minimum standard of the Ontario Building Code** – something which has been a problem for far too many purchasers in Ontario for decades now. She also offered related recommendations to the Ministry (see below **).

It was encouraging to hear Deputy Minister LeBlanc's opening remarks reference the need for newly built homes to be safe. This implies that all newly built homes must at least meet the Ontario Building Code during construction.

** These recommendations included:

1. Develop **performance standards for municipalities**, for example, qualifications of inspectors and number of inspectors, when it comes to municipal inspections to ensure that the OBC is being met during construction. Make these municipal performance standards publicly available;
2. **Monitor all municipalities** in relation to these performance standards and make this information publicly available;

3. **Maintain a registry** of all confirmed Ontario Building Code violations by municipality and make it publicly available. Obviously, given privacy considerations, do not publicly publish addresses/names; and
4. If performance standards are not met, take swift, appropriate action to **hold municipalities accountable**, for example, serious financial penalties, and make this information available to the public.

Karen also shared with Ministry staff **a recommendation from an Ottawa journalist**: Remove municipalities from new home inspections all together, and have homeowners hire their own inspectors to inspect during construction. Ministry staff said that they are looking for innovation, and this is certainly an innovative recommendation. However, Karen also highlighted that for this to proceed, the serious issues with the new home inspection industry must be addressed. The Liberals pushed through legislation regarding that industry, but the PCs have not yet moved forward with it, so the serious issues in the home inspection industry remain today.



On February 20, 2019, **CPBH responded to Minister Walker's announcements concerning Tarion.**

Unfortunately, Minister Walker took only small steps that many consider to be tinkering in the margins, while Justice Cunningham's Tarion Review, gathering dust, provides the solution and a comprehensive path forward with no further study needed. Read CPBH's full statement of response here: <https://tinyurl.com/yycvtbbx>

In early March, things got curiouser and curiouser. Some **MPPs in the Ford Government began circulating an authorless petition related to Tarion** seeking signatures in support of the measures announced in Minister Walker's February 20, 2019 announcement. What?? Yes, see it here: <https://tinyurl.com/yywqojte>. The petition does not identify who is petitioning, but recipients are asked to sign, circulate to their networks and return signed petitions to the MPP's office in question. Secret petitioning. What do you think about that?

As well, the Petition is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. That means all MPPs. **We haven't seen any NDP or Liberal MPPs distributing this petition, have you?**

Would you sign a petition distributed by your MPP's Office when that office will not tell you who was seeking your signature? Right. Us either. There is no question that they know and are a party to whatever this represents. Call your MPP's Office and ask them who is sponsoring the petition.

There is **nothing in the petition says this government will follow Judge Cunningham's recommendations.** It says they will tinker with the existing regime – Tarion – as announced, and look at a multi-provider system. They could opt to look at that for the full life of this government. In the meantime, a list of signatures could be construed as support for their approach.

Beyond that, the petition appears to be needless. **A minister making an announcement does not need petitioned signatures to implement plans when his government holds a majority.** A majority government is at liberty to push legislation through. No one from the PC Party is taking ownership as the sponsor of this petition so far. Who else would want signed support for the announced measures? Why?

Check out the petition with our marked up questions/comments at <https://tinyurl.com/yywqojte> or see the summary on Twitter <https://twitter.com/CPBH01/status/1105270065237155841>

We have a CPBH t-shirt for anyone who figures out who is sponsoring this petition. Let us know! One more thing: Does this tinkering and stalling sound at all like what this party said they were going to do before the election? Where are those then vocal MPPs Randy Hillier, Steve Clark, former critics Randy Pettapiece, Toby Barrett and Jim McDonnell now?



About CPBH

Canadians for Properly Built Homes (CPBH) is a national, not for profit corporation dedicated to healthy, safe, durable, energy efficient residential housing for Canadians, and is the only organization of its kind in Canada. Working for consumer awareness and protection, CPBH is run by a volunteer Board of Directors and is supported by a volunteer Advisory Council of industry experts and other key stakeholders. CPBH earned "partner" status with the Canadian Consumer Information Gateway (Industry Canada). Follow us:



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