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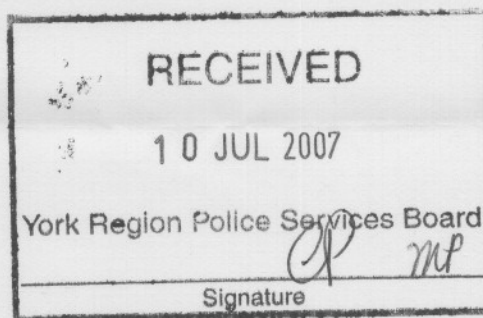
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JUL 03 2007

Our Reference #: M07-01085

His Worship David Barrow
Mayor
Regional Municipality of York
Chair
Regional Municipality of York Police Services Board
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket, ON
L3Y 4W5



Dear Mayor Barrow:

Thank you for your letter dated February 8, 2007, and for again sharing the views of the Regional Municipality of York Police Services Board on the *Independent Police Review Act, 2007* (IPRA). I have given your letter careful consideration and I very much appreciate your taking the time to convey your board's views to me.

As you know, the IPRA will implement recommendations in the LeSage Report including the creation of a new independent civilian body to administer the police review system in Ontario. I introduced the IPRA as Bill 103 on April 19, 2006. The Bill was referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy (SCJP), which held public hearings and conducted clause-by-clause analysis on Bill 103 between January 30, 2007 and February 1, 2007. The IPRA passed Third Reading in the Legislative Assembly on May 15, 2007, by a vote of 74-0. It received Royal Assent on May 17, 2007. Please note that most provisions of the IPRA are not yet in force. They will be proclaimed into force after a variety of transition activities have occurred.

This government accepted the LeSage recommendations made in 2005 and the IPRA will implement those recommendations. We recognize that the creation of the new Independent Police Review Director (IPRD) set out in the IPRA will be a significant change. We also believe it is a necessary change. We are committed to ensuring that the new system has the full confidence and respect of all stakeholders, including police services boards. The IPRD will complement the vital roles of both the police services boards and the Ontario Civilian Commission on Police Services and will work in concert with those organizations.

A fundamental aspect of the LeSage Report was that members of the public should be able to make complaints directly to an independent body. However, under the IPRA, regulations can be made to allow citizens to bring complaints directly to the police, if they choose to do so. Informal resolution will also be vital to the new police complaints system. The IPRA provides a framework for informal resolution that can be fleshed out through appropriate regulations and administrative policies.

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In regard to investigations, I have the utmost respect for the fine work carried out by police professional standards officers. Under the new system, the new civilian organization will still be able to refer investigations back to police as deemed appropriate, but it will also have the ability to conduct its own investigations.

The recent passage of the legislation will be followed by the appointment of an IPRD. The IPRD will be responsible for establishing many of the details of the new system. The new IPRD will work with your organization and police services boards across Ontario to ensure that we have a police complaints system that works for all Ontarians.

Once again, thank you for writing.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Bryant", enclosed within a large, loopy oval scribble.

Michael Bryant
Attorney General