

Reader wants chair elected

The following letter, to Premier Doug Ford and King-Vaughan MPP Stephen Lecce, was submitted to the King Weekly Sentinel.

I'm writing to express my strong opposition to the announced canceling of the direct vote for regional chairs in York Region, Peel, Niagara and Muskoka while allowing the continued direct voting of regional chairs in all other Ontario regional jurisdictions.

I am a long-time resident of King Township who takes an active interest and role in municipal elections. I believe strongly in the opportunity for citizens to freely vote for significant government representatives that impact municipalities.

I very much support and welcome the opportunity to be able to consider the various candidates and cast a vote for the position of regional chair in York Region for the very first time. Over 700,000 voters in York Region are about to lose this democratic privilege should you carry through with the legislation to cancel the direct vote of regional chairs in the four identified regions.

The role of regional chair in York Region has a salary of over \$200K paid for from public tax dollars. The York Region Council is responsible for a budget well over \$2 billion. The position of chair provides significant leadership and influence over the regional council. There needs to be accountability to taxpayers and citizens.

This is a regressive move on the part of the Ontario government, and further disengages citizens from the political process and elections. This is also an untimely and disruptive move right in the midst of an electoral process which has been underway with set and understood parameters and rules for three months, since May 1, 2018.

I urge you to retain the direct vote of regional chairs in all regional governments across Ontario, otherwise we will have unequal voting rights in Ontario and a double standard from region-to-region.

J. Bruce Craig