

**MOVED BY:** Jo-Ann Davis    **Toronto Catholic District School Board**

**TOPIC:**            **Gaps in Bill 181 Municipal Elections Modernization Act**

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**WHEREAS:** One of the stated main characteristics of Canada's electoral democracy is "Participation, Fairness and Transparency."

**WHEREAS:** Ontario's Municipal Elections Act is currently under review to help ensure that it meets the needs of communities.

**WHEREAS:** Given this aim, there are clear gaps in Bill 181 when it comes to meeting the electoral rights of Catholic ratepayers.

**WHEREAS:** Catholic school supporters have a unique voter registration burden placed on them because their support for Catholic schools does not follow them when they move, but rather they must re-register their support every time or be removed from the voters list.

**WHEREAS:** Catholic school supporters have been faced with further barriers to carrying out their basic democratic right to vote for their school board representative due to a range of reported issues including: a lack of ballots at polling stations, voters being provided with the wrong ballot, and voters being faced with a lack of knowledge to make correction to the designation of school support by staff at the polling station.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

The Chair write the Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing, cc'ing all Toronto MPPs and TCDSB Trustees, stating our support for the OCSTA position on this matter and indicating that we agree with the following recommended changes to Bill 181 in order to further advance the principles of fairness and good government being pursued by the government through this Bill:

- Amending Section 21 of the Municipal Elections Act to include provisions that direct the clerk to ensure MPAC delivers the most accurate voters' list possible
- Modifying the amendment to enable the Minister to direct MPAC to focus on enumeration issues impacting Catholic school supporters. This may include directives to MPAC to ensure an accurate assessment data base
- Amending Section 11 of the Assessment Act to direct MPAC to revise its information forms for property owners to ensure they indicate support for the school board of their choosing. School support should automatically follow a person when they move from one property to another
- Leave the scheduling of a PA day on municipal election day to the discretion of the local school board
- Amend Section 12.1 to include direction to the clerk to develop a plan to ensure polling stations have sufficient resource and trained staff to support Catholic voters in respect of school trustees.
- Amend Section 12.1 to direct the clerk of a municipality to develop and implement alternative methods of casting ballots in the next municipal election. These methods should include email, telephone and mail as well as other secure on-line technologies.