July 18, 2006

Mr. Pat Vanini, Executive Director
Association of Municipalities of Ontario
393 University Avenue, Suite 1701
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1E8

Dear Mr. Vanini:

At their meeting of July 17th, 2006 Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls passed the following resolution that we would like circulated to all municipalities requesting their support on this important issue:

WHEREAS the Province previously cancelled the re-assessment of properties that affected the 2005 municipal taxes;
AND WHEREAS this resulted in a doubling up of the inflationary factor as it applied to the assessments that determined the 2006 municipal taxes;
AND WHEREAS the Province has recently announced the cancellation of property re-assessments for the years 2006 and 2007 which affects the taxation years 2007 and 2008;
AND WHEREAS the stated reason for the cancellation is to give the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation time to implement the Provincial Ombudsman's report;
AND WHEREAS neither the Ombudsman's report nor Provincial announcements on the subject have indicated that there will be any changes to the Market Value System as a whole;
AND WHEREAS if no changes are made to the basic Market Value System then the assessments that affect the 2009 Municipal Taxes will reflect a tripling of the inflationary factor.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the Town of Smiths Falls requests that the Association of Municipalities of Ontario take the position that the Province either commit to a thorough review of the whole Market Value Assessment system during this cancellation period or that in the best long-term interests of the taxpayers of Ontario the re-assessments for 2006 and 2007 take place as originally planned so ratepayers will not have to contend with three years worth of inflation all at once in 2009;
AND FURTHER THAT this Resolution be forwarded to the Premier of the Province of Ontario, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, MPP Norm Sterling, and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.  (Resolution # 2006-07-179)

Council would also like to know why municipalities have not been consulted by AMO, MPAC or the Province on the Ombudsman's Report and more importantly why municipalities were not consulted on the cancellation of the re-assessments for 2006 and 2007.  If you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours very truly,

Kerry Costello, Acting Clerk
Town of Smiths Falls

cc:  Premier of the Province of Ontario
     Minister of Finance
     Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
     MPP Norm Sterling

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