

# Minister questioned on 4-3

During the recent provincial election campaign, I made no promises, save one— I promised my best efforts on behalf of all the people of Wellington-Halton Hills, if re-elected.

However, I did articulate the next steps I would want to take in the Legislature in response to the McGuinty government's controversial GTA West Corridor Study, if re-elected. I said I would want to ask questions of the government during Question Period, amongst other specific steps.

The following is the text of my questions on December 5 and the responses from the Premier and Minister of Transportation taken from Hansard, the official record of the Legislature's debates.

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**Mr. Ted Arnott:** My question is to the Premier. In 2007, the McGuinty government launched the GTA West Corridor study, saying that they wanted to have a comprehensive study of transportation options through our area.

One of the options they've identified through this process, alternative 4-3, has been rejected by the councils of the town of Halton Hills and the region of Halton, and by thousands of residents.

Just before the election, I called for the GTA West Corridor study to be put on hold pending a review of the whole thing by the next Minister of Transportation. Days later, they announced the delay.

Now we have a new minister. My question to the Premier is this: Will he tell the minister to listen to the people of Halton Hills and take alternative 4-3 off the table?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for Wellington-Halton Hills for his question. I acknowledge receiving the letter that he sent to me. We've also had a brief discussion with it. I've also undertaken to provide an MTO briefing for the member, and I understand I'm meeting with the mayor of Halton Hills tomorrow.

We're taking your issue very, very seriously, but of course the member knows that we're trying to meet the demands of our growing population and economy in the GTHA. We're looking at ways to build transportation links between large employment and population centres in the greater Golden Horseshoe and to US markets. There is a study under way, as you're aware. We've also commenced some additional studies. We will take the community's interests very seriously moving forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

## Ted Arnott



**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the minister's interest, but I have to say that his answer will not satisfy my constituents.

A new highway built along alternative 4-3 would cut our community in half, destroy farmland and heritage sites, and have a negative impact on our local environment. The town has identified a reasonable and practical alternative: the widening of the 401, which would have to be a more cost-effective solution in the current constrained fiscal environment that we're in.

Now is not the time for more dithering on this issue. We need a clear and unequivocal answer. Will the Premier assure my constituents that he will put an end to alternative 4-3 once and for all?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** We've received a lot of input and comments on the draft strategy and we've heard the concerns from local residents about a new east-west corridor through Halton Hills. In response to the concerns, we will conduct additional analysis and consultation on the highway recommendations in the Halton area. The additional work will examine in greater detail the impacts on farms, rural communities, businesses and natural features. We will bring forward the results for full public review and discussion before any decision on next steps. We take the concerns very seriously. We're looking at them. We will work with the community to try to find alternatives. But we have to wait for the full analysis to take place and I'll continue to work with the member as we move forward with this issue.

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Clearly, in light of the minister's answer, we need to continue to speak up on this issue. I continue to work with our Town and Regional councils and area residents to voice our opposition to Alternative 4-3. I have also launched a petition which can be downloaded from my website. I hope that I can present the petitions in the Legislature when it resumes in February.

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—Ted Arnott is the MPP for Wellington-Halton Hills and can be reached at 1-800-265-2366. or visit [www.tedarnottmpp.com](http://www.tedarnottmpp.com)

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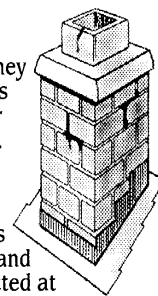
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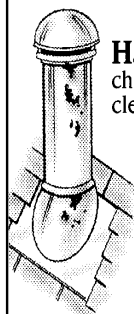
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