

## Inquiry needed in C. difficile issue

Despite its repeated resistance to a provincial inquiry into C. difficile bacterial outbreaks in Ontario hospitals, the province's Liberal government may have little choice but to yield to a growing chorus demanding a public inquiry into the health-care nightmare.

While Ontario Health Minister George Smitherman has stayed on message that he has no intention of holding a public inquiry that would duplicate recommendations already in the health care community's possession, some vocal relatives of the more than 260 victims of C. diff. may ultimately influence a reversal of that position.

Smitherman and his colleagues continue to find themselves under siege by Opposition members—as well as the loved ones of those who died because of recent C. difficile outbreaks at seven Ontario hospitals.

Last month the health minister said that recommendations from a coroner's inquest into a 2006 C. difficile death at a Sault Ste. Marie hospital produced a "comprehensive" list of recommendations addressing the spread of institutionally-spread infectious disease. Further review would yield more of the same advice, Smitherman remarked a few weeks ago.

However, an inquiry could provide two things the Sault Ste. Marie coroner's probe hasn't—closure for families who are still struggling to comprehend the loss of their loved ones, and peace of mind for Ontario residents whose confidence in the province's hospital system has been rocked by stories of patients checking in for things like elective surgery and not making it out alive.

While Smitherman is correct that there are many people within government, hospital administration and the medical community who must shoulder some responsibility for Ontario's C. difficile deaths, it is our elected officials who ultimately lead us through difficult times like these.

### What do you think?

Below are the results of our most recent online poll.  
For the current poll go to [www.independentfreepress.com](http://www.independentfreepress.com)

June is Recreation and Parks month. Do you plan on using a Recreation and Parks facility, program or service this month?

- Yes (50%)
- No (50%)

### Something bugging you?

Send us a letter!

Letters to the editor must include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be edited for content and/or length.

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Steve Nease



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Council's decision will cost taxpayers

Dear editor,  
Re: Keswick Sutherland School rulings.

Local planning staff AND regional planning staff have approved the proposal, and have recommended that council follow the approval. Why then, is council under a differ-

### School officials wrong to quash students' right to free speech

Dear editor  
My son was afraid to sign the petition supporting the attendance of Bradley Osborne at the Christ the King grad prom, (CtK students stage protest, May 3 *Independent & Free Press*) even though he agreed with the cause. He thought that expressing his opinion might mean suspension.

What's the administration of this school teaching my son? That speaking your mind is dangerous? That you'd better keep your mouth shut if you want to get along in the world? Hide your opinion? Don't let 'them' know what you really think? Is this the attitude we want to foster in young citizens about to take their place in a democratic society?

Being firm has its place in educating youth, no question; but frustrating them simply doesn't work, and quashing their right to free speech is just plain wrong.

Patti Post, Georgetown

ent opinion?

The application will go to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), which, unfortunately, the taxpayer will have to fund. Why? I attended the regional council meeting, and it really struck me when one councillor intimated that going to an OMB hearing was alright, since "it was in the budget."

Excuse me?

How fiscally responsible is this? To have the councillors take a proposal with two positive recommendations from the planning staff and arbitrarily decide otherwise... isn't

### No logic shown in ignoring planning staff

Dear editor,  
Re: Keswick Sutherland private school

What logic is there when councillors don't listen to their own planning staff and are ready to hire outside consultants and lawyers to the tune of millions, to prove to staff that they don't know what they are doing?

Reports state that Eighth Line, as a Class 4 road, and in its current condition, can accommodate up to 5,000 vehicles per day—that is up to 35,000 vehicles per week. Did anyone besides planning read the reports? How can this be a traffic issue?

At the (Region and Town) council meetings, no questions were asked of the planning departments to clarify or justify their reports. Why? I would have thought that after years of circula-

this the reason why we have planning staff?

I, too, am "perplexed" that after years of study and peer review, positive comments from planning staff and support from local residents, this proposal was reduced to picnic tables and an issue of sandwiches.

I am frustrated that, in a time when our tax dollars could be used for more productive and more positive projects, council thinks that to waste millions of dollars on a needless hearing is fiscally responsible.

When is the next election?

K. Bell, Georgetown

tion, reports, studies, reviews, and public meetings, there would have been dialogue between council and the planning departments. I thought this was an unbiased and democratic process. How could the planning staff at both levels of government, the Province, the solicitors, Town Environmental Advisory Committee, Credit Valley Conservation, Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee, and so many other commenting agencies get it so wrong when they recommended approval? What is really going on here?

As a community, we should be proud and excited that such a project has been proposed in our town.

Phillip Leslie,  
Georgetown

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