

OPINION

Protecting Halton youth

Region right to butt in

We strongly support the efforts of the Halton Region Health Department to provide a deterrent to retailers who illegally provide cigarettes and other tobacco products to minors.

As reported in The Champion Tuesday, the health department recently began posting information online about retailers who have been caught and convicted of selling cigarettes to young people — in direct contravention of the Tobacco Control Act.

Convictions from the last six months can be found on the Region's Web site www.halton.ca/health/programs/tobacco/offence_report_TCA.htm.

"The posting of this information on Halton's Web site is part of a comprehensive strategy intended to deter retailers from selling tobacco to kids," said Halton Medical Officer of Health Dr. Bob Nosal.

Slowly but steadily, society has taken a strong stance against smoking in public places. We should be equally diligent to put an end to young people obtaining the very product that could kill them.

More good news related to cigarette sales to our young people is on the horizon.

Under the new Smoke-Free Ontario Act, which will come into effect May 31, cigarette retailers can expect to face up to four compliance checks each year — twice as many as in 2005.

The new legislation also effectively bans smoking in all enclosed public places and workplaces, and toughens the rules prohibiting the selling of tobacco to minors.

Hopefully these new laws will help all Ontario residents breathe a little easier.



ReadersWrite

Send us your letters to miltone@haltonsearch.com or drop them off at 875 Main St. E.

'Silent majority' not being heard

DEAR EDITOR:

This letter is in response to the story in the March 7 Champion entitled 'Council changes its mind on condo development'.

I would like to comment on Councillor John Challinor's comments in this article, especially the part about the 'silent majority' supporting the condo development. I suppose he missed the first meeting where approximately 400 residents signed a petition

against the development.

I was at the first two meetings and have since given up believing Milton council listens to its taxpayers. I would like to hear from anyone supporting more congestion, construction and ugly buildings in this 'small' town.

I believe the 'silent majority' is simply silent for the same reason we can't fight this 'old-boys club'.

SHARON DROUILLARD
KNIGHT TRAIL

Theviewfromhere

A three or four-year council? The jury's still out

Well, I've been listening to both sides of the argument when it comes to whether the Province should change municipal council terms from three years to four, and I have to say I'm still undecided.

My initial thought was that upping council's term in office would make sense.

For starters, it would cut down on the sheer cost of elections to municipalities and the candidates who run in them.

It would also allow those who are new to council to establish themselves and learn the ropes, so to speak.

And, it would bring municipalities in line with their provincial counterparts, since the Ontario government only changes every four years.

But on the other hand, what happens if you end up with a horrible council? Then they're locked in for four years. Hmmm...

This poses a problem.

That's why I can also see the benefits in the shorter term, since it would be one less year a municipality would have to live with its council if it wasn't happy with its members or decisions.

In addition, I think it's important to mention the loud and clear message local residents have been putting forward for some quite time — they want to see some new faces at the Milton council table, and are anxious to get on with another election.

For this reason alone, I can see how a three-year council term is a good idea. It brings the 'fresh blood' into council chambers at a faster rate, which I believe is what Miltonians want.



Melanie Hennessey

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario recently surveyed councils across the province to see how they felt about the issue and came back with the conclusion that a four-year term is the most ideal way to go.

While Premier Dalton McGuinty is taking the association's position into consideration, I hope he also listens to constituents regarding what they would like to see for a council term.

After all, they're the ones that will have to live with council's decisions for a long time to come.

Check out Tuesday's Champion to see what Milton council members think of the four-year term proposal.

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