

From Queen's Park by Sylvia Jones MPP ? Government bill includes Jones? Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act



Prior to the Ontario Legislature rising for summer recess, a number of bills received Royal Assent and became law, including Bill 6 ? the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act.

While Bill 6 was being reviewed in committee, my PC colleagues were able to incorporate parts of one of my private member's bills, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act, into it.

I introduced the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act to promote the use of recycled aggregates in publicly funded construction projects across the province by ensuring the public sector does not reject construction bids that want to use recycled aggregates in a project. This would eliminate barriers to recycled aggregates being considered for use in public sector construction across the province.

Aggregate resources are the sand, gravel, clay and stone that play a pivotal part in the construction of infrastructure, like schools, roads homes, buildings and hospitals across our province. There is a large demand for aggregates in Ontario, but this demand puts pressure on the extraction for more aggregate. This is where recycled aggregates can play a crucial role. Examples of recycled aggregates would be concrete and asphalt that have been reclaimed from construction and refurbishment projects, which are then processed to be reused in other projects. If more recycled aggregates were used, it would take away some of the pressure to meet the ongoing demand for new aggregates.

Currently across Ontario, there are dozens of public sector bodies like the Ministry of Transportation and some municipalities that are doing a great job incorporating recycled aggregates into their construction work. However, many public sector bodies award construction contracts with the caveat that only brand new aggregate must be used. This means any construction proposal that mentions the use of recycled aggregate will not even be considered. This is unfortunate, considering recycled aggregates have proven to be as safe and reliable as new aggregates.

I am pleased the government has adopted parts of my private member's bill, the Aggregate Recycling Promotion Act as part of Bill 6 by setting out that ?infrastructure planning and investment should endeavour to make use of acceptable recycled aggregates.?

No one should be prevented from competing for a contract solely because they propose to use recycled aggregates. If an Ontario business wants to submit a bid to build or resurface a road, then of course they should be able to use recycled aggregates in their proposal. This is not something we should be stopping; this is something we should be promoting. This will strike a balance between economic viability and environmental sustainability.

If you would like a copy of Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, or to learn more about what I am doing at Queen's Park, please visit www.sylviajonesmpp.ca