

Jones' bill to respect private property passes key vote

The private member's bill of Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones, Bill 36, the Respecting Private Property Act, passed second reading in the Legislature last week.

It has been sent to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy for public consultation.

"I am happy to see Bill 36 pass second reading today," Jones said. "My bill has received support from a wide range of stakeholders and residents."

Jones' bill has received support from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), the Peel Federation of Agriculture, as well as local residents of Dufferin-Caledon.

If enacted, it would amend the Trespass to Property Act by creating a minimum fine of \$500 for trespassing and by increasing the maximum compensation for damages to \$25,000. Currently the Trespass to Property Act has no minimum fine for those who trespass, and has a maximum limit of \$1,000 on compensation for damages.

"We cannot expect property owners to foot the bill themselves when someone else has caused the damage," Jones said. "In addition, we cannot allow trespassers to get away without facing a penalty for committing a crime."

"We need to ensure property owners are fairly compensated for destruction to their property, and we need to signal that trespassing is a serious issue and will not be taken lightly," Jones added.