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March 7, 2019

The Honourable Caroline Mulroney  
Attorney General  
McMurtry-Scott Building, 11th Floor  
720 Bay Street  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2S9

Dear Attorney General Mulroney:

I would like to outline the ongoing concerns that municipal governments have with the *Construction Act, 2017*, and to reiterate my request to meet with you on this item. Without legislative amendments and support from the Ministry for implementation, we do not believe that the prompt payment and mandatory adjudication regimes will work effectively by the time the legislation is to come into force.

AMO, and our members, have always supported the principle of prompt payment, as evidenced by various municipal governments that already have policies in place that protect workers and suppliers. That is why we have played an active role in modernizing the *Construction Lien Act* since the work on prompt payment began.

While the *Construction Act* has been modernized in many respects, we recognize that the most significant pieces of legislation come into force on October 1, 2019. With that date fast approaching, AMO is asking the Ministry to consider four amendments:

1. Owners should be provided more than 14 days to publish a notice of non-payment to ensure that due diligence is done before payment of a proper invoice is required (e.g. 21 business days);
2. The time period between December 24<sup>th</sup> to January 2<sup>nd</sup> of each calendar year should be excluded from the calculation of time with respect to Prompt Payment and Adjudication, similar to the recently proposed federal legislation;
3. The date for implementing the Prompt Payment and Adjudication regimes should be postponed from October 1, 2019, to 1-year post-establishment of the Authorized Nominating Authority (ANA); and
4. That the Ministry create and communicate practice guides, interpretation bulletins, and webinars in alignment with Recommendations 97 & 98 of the [Expert Panel's Report](#) to educate owners, contractors, and subcontractors on the new regimes.

The proposed 28-day timeline for owners to pay contractors on the receipt of a “proper invoice” does not provide enough time for municipal staff to inspect and certify whether the work has been completed properly. Municipal governments require the ability to certify work before payment is remitted to protect our property taxpayer dollars. This Act essentially prohibits certification before payment, which is problematic and should be reconsidered. Otherwise, the Act leaves municipal taxpayers vulnerable to increasing construction project costs as well as legal fees.

Further, most municipal governments are closed for the holidays or maintain a much reduced staffing level during December 24<sup>th</sup> to January 2<sup>nd</sup>. It is important that municipalities are not forced into impossible timelines when those imposed by the legislation are already so tight.

Many details about the Authorized Naming Authority (ANA) are still to be determined. We recognize that the proposed regulations have provided some clarity, and that Expressions of Interest for ANA members were released in January 2019. In order to have the ANA working by October 1<sup>st</sup>, the Province must develop a certification regime for the adjudicators, ensure that there are sufficient adjudicators to meet demand, and ensure they have all been certified. Only once these details are in place can owners, contractors and subcontractors be educated on how this mechanism will work in practice.

This Act, in its current form, makes Ontario the first jurisdiction in the world to have prompt payment and adjudication regimes run simultaneously. We all need to get it right, and owners are willing to do their part to get ready. To achieve this we strongly encourage the Ministry to create practice guides, interpretative bulletins, and webinars to communicate how to prepare for these regimes prior to coming into force.

One consideration the Ministry should explore is creating a centralized web database hosted for all construction in the province for notices and additional project information. A website commissioned by the Province could have cost-recovery fees and be more affordable than the current proposed vehicle.

I appreciate your thoughtful consideration of these issues, and look forward to meeting to discuss how we can make the *Construction Act* a success for all of Ontario. The Ministry can reach out to AMO staff to clarify any details needed.

Sincerely,



Jamie McGarvey  
AMO President  
Mayor, Town of Parry Sound

cc: The Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing