



**Written Submission to the Ontario Standing
Committee on General Government**

Bill 160, Strengthening Quality and Accountability for Patients Act, 2017

Submitted By:
Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)

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The Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) appreciates having the opportunity to provide comments on Bill 160, Strengthening Quality and Accountability for Patients Act, 2017. As a representative of 110 municipal governments across Northeastern Ontario, it is important that the Standing Committee on General Government take our comments on the legislation into consideration.

FONOM is a membership-based association that is the unified voice of Northeastern Ontario, representing and advocating on behalf of 110 cities, towns and municipalities. Our mission is to improve the economic and social quality of life for all Northerners and to ensure the future of our youth.

FONOM is supportive of the government for proposing legislative changes to modernize the healthcare system and to improve patient outcomes and create efficiencies. However, we continue to maintain strong opposition to any implementation of fire fighters performing expanded medical services if certified as a paramedic. The government has stated that this initiative is a pilot project and will only be implemented on a volunteer basis by willing host municipalities. However, we are concerned that without amendments to the legislation to guarantee that it will remain voluntary, arbitrators will impose on unwilling participants, given the current interest arbitration system.

As you will recall, municipal governments have experienced a pilot project be replicated across the province previously. The 24 hour shift for fire fighters as an example, was imposed by arbitrators against unwilling and unsupportive municipalities.

These valid concerns from municipal employers need to be addressed by amending the Fire Protection and Prevention Act and the Ambulance Services Collective Bargaining Act.

Furthermore, FONOM has yet to see any evidence that these pilots would improve patient outcomes, yet municipalities would experience significant labour and risk management issues. Therefore, as the government continues to move forward with these pilots, there must be an amendment to the legislation that would prevent arbitrators from replicating the pilots onto unwilling municipalities.

Thank you for taking the concerns and interests of municipalities into consideration.