



MEMBER UPDATE

April 18, 2025

Ontario Introduces Landmark Legislation to Modernize Approvals and Boost Economic Growth

Over the last several days, the Government of Ontario introduced two new pieces of legislation that indicate significant progress toward tackling long-standing barriers to building. The new bills include many changes that OHBA and our members have advocated for, and we are pleased to see bold actions being taken to modernize Ontario's housing approval systems and processes.

Bill 2, *Protect Ontario Through Free Trade Within Canada Act, 2025* – Will remove trade barriers, boost economic growth, and enhance labour mobility across provinces. This legislation aims to eliminate red tape, promote interprovincial trade, and support local businesses, while establishing agreements with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to facilitate mutual recognition of goods, services, and workers. Ontario is positioning itself as a leader in Canadian free trade, seeking to strengthen economic integration, create jobs, and diversify supply chains amid global uncertainty.

Bill 5, *Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act, 2025* – Introduces wide-ranging reforms to streamline approval processes for infrastructure, housing, and resource projects while maintaining environmental standards, aiming to boost economic growth and job creation. Key measures include creating special economic zones, accelerating mining approvals, and speeding up housing and infrastructure permits through a "registration-first" approach, which will reduce delays and improve predictability. These reforms will benefit the home building industry by making project approvals faster, lowering costs, and upholding environmental protections, supporting more efficient development across the province. These changes touch on several key areas that have been pain points for the industry for years.

Notable measures in the legislation include:

- Designating special economic zones to fast-track important projects meeting high standards, with streamlined requirements and priority services.
- Accelerating mining approvals with a new “One Project, One Process” model aimed at reducing review times by 50%, while maintaining Indigenous consultation.
- Speeding up housing, transit, and infrastructure projects affecting species through a “registration-first” approach, allowing projects to proceed after registration and meeting requirements.
- Launching a Species Conservation Program with \$20 million annually to support conservation efforts and community initiatives.
- Saving businesses about \$2.6 million yearly by eliminating registration fees for environmental registry processes.
- Protecting critical minerals by restricting registration, transfer, or leasing of mining claims to safeguard the supply chain.
- Strengthening energy security by limiting foreign state-owned company access and streamlining project permits.

OHBA CEO, Scott Andison, welcomed today’s announcement, saying, “The Ontario Home Builders’ Association commends the provincial government for Bill 5, which modernizes approvals, cuts red tape, and speeds up housing projects. These reforms reduce duplication, streamline permitting, and support builders and municipalities in delivering more homes efficiently. This is a smart move that protects jobs, the environment, and makes Ontario more affordable.”

OHBA will continue to analyze both bills and work with the government as additional details and regulatory frameworks are developed. We will update members on what these changes mean for their businesses and how they can engage in upcoming consultations.

Bill 2 can be found here: [Bill 2, Protect Ontario Through Free Trade Within Canada Act, 2025](#)

Bill 5 can be found here: [Bill 5, Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025](#)

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to building vibrant, affordable communities across Ontario. Please contact [Kirstin Jensen](#), Vice President, Policy, Advocacy, and Relationships for questions or comments.