

Dear Residents,

I am sending this email blast to the Rate Payers or Lake Associations for which I have a contact name. This blast includes Paint Lake, Shoe Lake, Pen Lake, Oxbow Lake, Bayview Point, Bigwin Islanders, Bella-Rebecca, Walker Pell, Port Cunnington and Lake of Bays. If you know of other associations, I would appreciate you forwarding this email and attachments to them.

As I believe most of you are aware, The District of Muskoka puts the cost of policing onto the tax levy. This means that the Township of Lake of Bays pays approximately 12% of the total costs. However, our calls for service represent less than 4% of the total. The known cost of OPP policing for Lake of Bays is approximately \$1,200,000. When the cost is allocated on the tax bill, Lake of Bays' cost increases to \$1,800,000. This extra \$600,000 represents an additional tax bill of \$20.85 for every \$100,000 of assessment (i.e. for the average property in Lake of Bays which is assessed at \$700,000, the tax increase is \$145.95).

The 3 Township Mayors (Georgian Bay, Muskoka Lakes and Lake of Bays) have engaged a consultant/lobbyist to help us convince the Provincial Government that it needs to redress this problem by making a minor change to the Police Services Act. We have had good success in education the Ministers and their senior policy staff of the problem and the potential fixes. What we have not been as successful in accomplishing is convincing them of the need to make a change in the Act - they like to default to this being a "local" problem. One of the reasons for this is that while they have heard from the Mayors, they have not heard from the residents.

Therefore we have drafted a letter for the Premier and we are asking all residents to sign the letter and individually send it to the Premier. We have been advised that the Premier (and Minister Lalonde of Community Safety and Correctional Services) are influenced by the letters from residents, especially if there are many of them. I have attached the proposed draft letter (but anyone can modify/edit/change this letter to their own desire) and I would appreciate it if you could send it to all of the members of your Association. Also attached is a more detailed explanation of the problem for everyone's benefit.

Thank you very much for your assistance. Time is of the essence because the Police Services Act is scheduled to be rewritten and tabled in the fall session of this Parliament. Also, next year is an election year and I expect the Premier will be very sensitive to her constituency.

Regards,

Bob

PS - we do have a draft petition available if that is an easier vehicle to capture the will of the people and I have attached it below.

Bob Young  
Mayor Lake of Bays Township  
Township: (705)-635-2272 ext 244 or option 9  
Home Office: {705)-635-1845  
Mobile: (705)-571-0657  
bobyounglob@gmail.com  
[www.lobmayor.ca](http://www.lobmayor.ca)

### IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ

#### Overview

Please take two-minutes to read this notice – it is important, and could save your family hundreds of dollars.

Muskoka is a wonderful place, with many great people and businesses, whether you are in the Towns or Townships. However, the District Council in Muskoka has made a decision that treats people in the Townships very unfairly...and it means YOU are paying a lot more in property taxes than you should.

If you are a resident or own property in the Townships of Georgian Bay, Lake of Bays or Muskoka Lakes, YOU have an important voice that needs to be heard at Queen’s Park.

#### What’s the Issue?

In 2014, the Government of Ontario created a new funding formula for OPP police services, which calculates the amount that each municipality must pay (and is reflected in your municipal property taxes). Of the 323 municipalities in Ontario that use the OPP, there is **only one municipality in the entire Province that DOES NOT follow the formula** (or an alternative that has unanimous support): the District Municipality of Muskoka. Instead, the District Council has come up with a *different* formula that shifts a lot of the costs of policing from taxpayers in the Towns, to taxpayers in the Townships.

What does it mean for you?

If you are a taxpayer in:	You pay (extra):
Muskoka Lakes	
Lake of Bays	\$20.85 per \$100,000 Assessment
Georgian Bay	

That’s not fair. Muskoka should follow the rules, just like every other place in Ontario.

Over the last eighteen months, the Mayors of Muskoka Lakes, Lake of Bays and Georgian Bay have been working on a solution so that taxpayers – wherever they are in Muskoka – pay their fair share. This includes meeting with Ministers at Queen’s Park, and other decision makers.

**We Need Your Help**

Please take a moment to:

1. Send the attached letter to the Premier
2. Sign the attached petition.

Thank you for your support.

(date), 2017

Hon. Kathleen Wynne  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

via email: [premier@ontario.ca](mailto:premier@ontario.ca)

**RE: Unfair cost-sharing of police service costs in the District Municipality of Muskoka**

Dear Premier Wynne,

As a taxpayer in the Township of Lake of Bays, I am calling on you to take immediate action to resolve the ongoing abuse of power in the District Municipality of Muskoka (DMM) with respect to its cost-sharing model for policing services.

As you know, of the 323 municipalities in Ontario that rely on the OPP for police services, the DMM *is the only municipality in the entire province* that does not use the Province's formula for dividing police costs, or an alternative that has unanimous support from the lower tier municipalities. Instead, using their majority on the District Council, the three Towns have imposed a *different* formula – one that shifts a substantial portion of their policing costs onto Township taxpayers like me.

Premier, that's not fair. I absolutely believe in paying my fair share of taxes to fund the services that we all benefit from in society. Those are Ontario values – ones that my family fully supports. However, this is entirely different: this scheme isn't about fairness at all – it is designed to artificially lower taxes for one group of taxpayers in larger centres in Muskoka, while shifting the costs onto another group of taxpayers from smaller communities in our District. For me, this scheme takes hundreds of dollars *more* out of our family budget.

The impact of this action is dramatic, unfair, and represents a *continuing abuse of power* that cannot be fixed inside the District. Indeed, there have already been five attempts to adopt the Province's formula for dividing police costs, all of which have failed. I don't want to live in a Province where 323 municipalities follow one set of rules, and one municipality acts with impunity.

As a resident of Ontario, I expect your government to ensure fairness. There are numerous examples where the Provincial government has acted and intervened to address fairness issues in larger urban centres, but there is a perception that smaller, rural communities are often ignored.

Premier, I urge you to take action to resolve this situation and ensure that this cannot happen again – either in DMM or elsewhere in Ontario. We simply want to follow the Province’s formula for dividing OPP police services costs in our District – just like 323 other municipalities in the province do.

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Township Address)

(Email)


