



News Release

AMM Comments on Proposed Water Legislation

Many positive attributes in bill, but much clarification needed

September 14, 2004 - The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) made a presentation to the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs yesterday to voice their comments regarding Bill 22: The Water Protection Act.

AMM President Stuart Briese began the presentation by noting the many positive attributes in Bill 22. "Bill 22 is enabling legislation that will help the Province to meet its mandate to protect Manitoba's water resources," said Briese. The AMM is encouraged in the focus on watershed based planning, the creation of a Water Council, and the development of watershed quality management zones. The AMM is also pleased to see that Bill 22 guarantees that there will be consultation in the development of the regulations for this act.

The AMM also raised some concerns during their presentation. The bill is visibly vague and grants unprecedented powers to the Minister of Water Stewardship. The bill is also vague on how all of these newly legislated ideas and requirements will be implemented, and on who will be financing the implementation of this legislation.

"Without Provincial financial assistance for this bill, the financial responsibility will be simply downloaded to municipalities or will be financed by all Manitobans through user fees," said Briese. "Simply put, Bill 22 will not work without a clear commitment from the Provincial Government to adequately fund the requirements of this legislation."

He also noted that, "It is clear that municipalities will have a major role to play in the implementation of the concepts laid out in the bill, but how great a role is not clear. It is crucial that local people are involved in the process".

The AMM represents all 199 municipalities in Manitoba.

- 30 -

AMM's complete presentation can be viewed online at www.amm.mb.ca/legpresentations.htm

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