

HE - A11-1

Ajax, Ontario

December 6, 2010

Subject: Air Ambulance ORNGE

LEGISLATIVE SERVICES	
COPY TO:	FOR:
Chair ✓	Committee ✓
CAO ✓	
Corporate Services	Council
Public Works	
Employee and Business Services	Dec. 16, 2010/AG
Health Services ✓	File MOH ✓
Human Services	
Peel Living	

The Honorable Dalton McGuinty, MPP (Ottawa South)  
 Premier  
 Province of Ontario  
[dmcguinty.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org](mailto:dmcguinty.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org)

REFERRAL TO \_\_\_\_\_  
 RECOMMENDED \_\_\_\_\_  
 DIRECTION REQUIRED \_\_\_\_\_  
 RECEIPT RECOMMENDED ✓ \_\_\_\_\_

Dear: Mr. McGuinty

I write to you today out of concern, disbelief and with utter dismay. Recently on local newscasts, we have learned that our Air Ambulance service provider (ORNGE) is planning to close their Toronto base and move to Hamilton. A vital part of Ontario's medical system, ORNGE provides sophisticated medical transport in your community for the very ill and critically injured patients, in the air and on the ground. Their flight paramedics transport some of the province's unwell and most vulnerable patients. They transport approximately 20,000 patients per year, and that number is growing. I was airlifted to a hospital and know first-hand the importance of airborne medical care. I am very worried that this move will reduce the chances of patients' survival by the incredible and dedicated people who staff these flying hospitals. As recently as November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010, in a 24 hour period, ORNGE flight paramedics responded to and transported 84 patients. From January 1st 2010 thru July 31st 2010, there were 1026 calls received by the Toronto Base from their serviced area. 731 or 71.25% of these calls had Toronto as their destination while 80 or 7.8% had Hamilton as their destination. Why would anyone want to move such an essential service out of the largest city in the Province to a smaller venue?

ORNGE's decision to close and move their Toronto base appears to be severely lacking in logic. Moving their operation to Hamilton increases a patient's risk, perhaps one of your constituents, of not surviving a serious injury or heart attack where every second and minute is needed to facilitate a patient's survival. Moving the Toronto base to Hamilton only increases the response time by several crucial minutes and places our lives in jeopardy. In some instances the

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delay in response will be up to 20 minutes in some areas. The majority of trauma patients and patient transfers are to hospitals in Toronto. The increased operational costs, the emotional, physical and detriment to their employees notwithstanding. It is essential to everyone concerned that ORNGE keep its base operation in Toronto.

**If your life was hanging in the balance, wouldn't you want the best equipped medical transport team at your side and to remain in Toronto?**

While a business may do what it wishes to increase its bottom line or program awareness, this essential service needs to keep its base in the Greater Toronto area. If part of ORNGE's decision is based on moving into an international market, there are other airports that can easily handle their anticipated needs. Why not consider Pearson International Airport or the Oshawa Airport. The services offered at Pearson are well known and speak for themselves.

The City of Oshawa is in the enviable position of being one of a very few municipalities in Canada with its own full-service airport. This Airport is a cargo hub and in the Greater Toronto area. It offers charter services, flight training, aircraft repair and servicing facilities, and longer runways. It is an unparalleled air transportation facility. It features a brand new passenger terminal building, runways to serve a broad range of aircraft, modern navigational aids, serviced land for business investment and development, corporate and charter support facilities and more. The installment of a state-of-the-art aviation weather measurement system at the Oshawa Airport has contributed to the airport's continued growth in the corporate and general aviation segments of the industry while it provides up-to-the-minute on-site weather data to airport personnel and pilots.

ORNGE is essential in getting patients to the medical care they need and when they need it. ORNGE delivers specialized medical care in a mobile environment and with its highly trained staff links hospitals together enabling access to specialized care for the people of Ontario. A vital part of Ontario's medical system, ORNGE provides sophisticated medical transport for very ill and critically injured patients, in the air and on the ground. While ORNGE has more than 400 employees, medical care on-board ORNGE aircraft is provided by a team of more than 150 flight paramedics, certified to practice in Ontario with specialized training in the care of acute patients.

A majority of ORNGE's Toronto based calls are either north or east of Toronto. With the move to Hamilton, this will result in an increase in response time to a majority of its serviced areas. The increased response time is of significant concern to the well being of patients in general. At the moment, responding to an emergency in Peterborough from Toronto takes about 30 minutes. To respond to the same call from Hamilton will increase the response and arrival time by approximately eighteen (18) minutes. This additional time places a patient at

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further risk and the critically timed attention they may need. This is only one example from the many areas that will be affected by this move.

I am requesting all Mayors, their Councils, Ontario Premier D. McGuinty, Members of the Provincial Parliament; adopt Resolutions to support the residents of the areas serviced by ORNGE's Toronto Base, in condemning ORNGE's anticipated move to Hamilton. It just does not make good sense to move this crucial and essential service to Hamilton. It is detrimental to the constituents of your community.

Yours Truly,

*R. Gleeson*

R. (Bob) Gleeson

CC: All MPPs

Enclosures:

**COMPARISON RESPONSE TIMES IF ORNGE MOVES TO HAMILTON**

<b>From:</b>	<b><u>Hamilton</u></b>	<b><u>Toronto</u></b>	<b><u>Increase In Response Time</u></b>	<b><u>Number of calls Jan 1 – July 31</u></b>
<b>To:</b>				
Alliston	30	17	13 minutes	26
Bancroft	75	55	20 minutes	9
Barrie	42	26	16 minutes	46
Belleville	65	47	18 minutes	19
Bowmanville	40	17	23 minutes	17
Bracebridge	58	42	16 minutes	17
Cobourg	42	28	14 minutes	48
Collingwood	40	32	8 minutes	30
Georgetown	19	12	7 minutes	18
Huntsville	70	52	18 minutes	26
Kingston	82	65	17 minutes	21
Lindsay	42	25	17 minutes	44
Midland	52	35	17 minutes	27
Minden	61	42	19 minutes	19
Niagara	20	17	3 minutes	19
Orangeville	23	17	6 minutes	20
Oshawa	33	15	18 minutes	22
Ottawa	112	94	18 minutes	4
Owen Sound	52	42	10 minutes	22
Parry Sound	67	52	15 minutes	10
Peterborough	48	30	18 minutes	141
Port Perry	37	17	20 minutes	22

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