



Legislative Assembly

JOHN YAKABUSKI, MPP Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke NEWS RELEASE

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Yakabuski Concerned that Liberal Action on Ombudsman's Report will be Inaction

(**Toronto**) On the heels of Ombudsman Andre Marin's scathing report on the state of affairs of the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, John Yakabuski charged the Ontario Government to act on Marin's 22 recommendations swiftly.

"When we grilled them on the MPAC situation in the fall, the Government's answers were predictably uniform, saying they looked forward to the Ombudsman's report. Well, it is now officially public, and they have had access to its recommendations for a couple of weeks now, so there is no need to delay in implementing those recommendations," said Yakabuski.

The report, which described MPAC as "experiencing a crisis of credibility," contains 22 recommendations, 20 of which are directed at the MPAC agency itself and 2 of which directly propose action on the part of the Ontario Government. MPAC has accepted that immediate action needs to be taken on 18 of the 20 recommendations, but Finance Minister Duncan and the McGuinty Government are already stalling action on the two recommendations that Queen's Park can address in its Chamber.

While Yakabuski acknowledges that the Government's plan to extend the appeals deadline for another 90 days to the end of June is welcome and necessary to give property owners a fair chance to appeal their assessments, he is worried that the Government will simply hide behind this 90 day window and not take significant action on the Ombudsman's report. He questioned the Premier about this aspect on March 28th in the House and also made a statement about it March 29th, saying "the Government must ensure that within this 90 day period, concrete and long-term solutions to these problems be implemented."

However, Yakabuski also made the observation that, "it is no small irony that the Government has ensured that the appeals extension will go beyond the life of this session, making it impossible for the Opposition to question them in this Chamber." Yakabuski vowed to continue to pressure the government into action on MPAC reform during the next three months that the Legislature sits.

