

MANY PATHS TO LEGISLATION

By Howard Brown and Blake Keidan



Cheri DiNovo, MPP, represents the Toronto riding of Parkdale-High Park.

MANY BELIEVE that legislation only comes about as a result of a government initiative. We often forget that opposition can also bring it about.

On March 14, Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Ted McMeekin, MPP (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Westdale), along with Deputy Premier Deb Matthews, MPP (London North Centre), who is also president of the Treasury Board and minister responsible for Ontario's poverty reduction strategy, announced new inclusionary zoning legislation for the province. The proposal would give municipalities the ability to require developers to include a certain percentage of affordable housing units in any new residential development.

"[Toronto] could have built 12,000 affordable housing units in the last five years had inclusionary zoning been in place," McMeekin says.

This proposal has been a long time coming. It is partially a result of five private member's bills brought by opposition NDP MPP Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale-High Park). She first introduced the proposal in 2009.

More recently, Peter Milczyn, MPP (Etobicoke-Lakeshore), who spent 17 years on Toronto city council and is the legislature's only architect, introduced a similar proposal.

DiNovo has consistently pushed for this legislation. In an interview with *Engineering Dimensions*, she said: "I believe this was the right route to go. [It] just depended on timing."

This is perhaps an example for PEO, which has worked for years to get its *Professional Engineers Act* amended to remove the so-called industrial exception that allows unlicensed people to perform work on machinery or equipment used to produce products in their employers' facilities. PEO's concern is that the repeal represents a gap in PEO's ability to regulate the practice of professional engineering and potentially puts manufacturing workers at risk. The NDP has a long history of championing causes for society and workers.

DiNovo, who was first elected in a by-election in 2006, is known for being outspoken on issues and was recently featured in an interview by Jane Taber in the *Globe and Mail* on women in politics (www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/at-queens-park-cheri-dinovos-social-activism-is-linked-with-her-past/article28921933/). DiNovo's brother, Paul DiNovo, P.Eng., FEC, was inducted into PEO's Order of Honour as an Officer at an April 29 gala. He was first inducted as a Member of the Order of Honour in 2000 and is an ambassador for the profession through his many volunteer roles.

It is easy to think only government decides. But as Mike Colle, MPP (Eglinton-Lawrence), pointed out in the March/April 2016 issue of *Engineering Dimensions* (p. 24), "the door is not always open at the top, but with MPPs, sooner or later you are going to be heard." So, it's important for PEO members to stay in touch with their MPPs—whether ministers, government MPPs, or opposition MPPs. You never know where your support will come from.

One year ago, the current prime minister was a third party leader. Many of his members are now sitting in cabinet. Σ

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