

Subject: addressing your concerns
Date: Wed, 13 Feb 2002 12:00:58 -0500
From: [Dalton McGuinty-MPP@ontla.ola.org](mailto:Dalton_McGuinty-MPP@ontla.ola.org)
To: laboldt@sympatico.ca

Dear Ms. Boldt:

Thank you very much for your recent e-mail. It's always good to hear from you. I regret that I was unable to respond to you sooner.

I appreciate the important concerns you raised on behalf of VOCO. What I conveyed to reporters during my visit to Peterborough last October was the same message I have consistently relayed to all Ontarians: Ontario Liberals believe in local democracy. We believe that the best solutions are local solutions and that local residents should have the right to decide on the future of their municipality. We also realize that each Ontario community is unique and that a "one-size-fits-all" dictated policy from the Premier's office is not optimal for our municipalities.

In my statement, I did not commit to restoring Victoria County. **That is up to the people of Victoria County.** I simply committed to ensuring that local people would have the right to decide on the future of their municipality.

With respect to reversing a past amalgamation, the Ontario Liberal position is to allow a local referendum when there is a substantial demonstration of public support. I stated on my visit to Victoria County in October 2001 that the petition campaign there has clearly met this threshold. On that basis, **I have committed that a Liberal government will ensure a binding referendum is held to allow local citizens to determine whether or not to dismantle the amalgamated city.**

I realize how difficult the amalgamation of the new City of Kawartha Lakes has been for Victoria County residents. To me this is indicative of how strongly residents feel about their communities. They deserve to have a say in how their communities will be governed. **Ontario Liberals will place the decision-making power where it belongs--with local residents.**

Ms. Boldt, I hope this clears up any misunderstanding. Thanks again for sharing the concerns of VOCO's members with me. I value your input and welcome it on any future issue.

Yours truly,

Dalton McGuinty, MPP
Leader of the Official Opposition
Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party