

Township of Southgate
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September 4, 2025

Re: Resolution of Support – City of St. Catharines – Elect Respect Pledge

Please be advised that at the September 3, 2025, regular Council meeting, the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Southgate, approved the following:

No. 2025-423

Moved By Deputy Mayor Dobreen

Seconded By Councillor John

Be it resolved that the correspondence from the City of St. Catharine's regarding the Elect Respect pledge be received and supported as outlined below:

WHEREAS democracy is healthy when everyone is able to participate fully and safely and contribute to the well-being of their community; and

WHEREAS we are witnessing the dissolution of democratic discourse and respectful debate across all levels of government and in neighbouring jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS Ontario's municipally elected officials and municipal staff are dealing with increasingly hostile, unsafe work environments facing threats and harassment; and

WHEREAS social media platforms have exacerbated disrespectful dialogue, negative commentary, and toxic engagement which disincentivizes individuals, especially women and candidates from diverse backgrounds from running for office; and

WHEREAS better decisions are made when democracy is respectful and constructive and the voices of diverse genders, identities, ethnicities, races, sexual orientation, ages and abilities are heard and represented around municipal council tables; and

WHEREAS the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's Healthy Democracy Project has identified concerning trends with fewer people voting in local elections and running for municipal office; and

WHEREAS in 2024, female elected representatives from across Halton formed a group called H.E.R. (Halton Elected Representatives) which pledged to speak out against harassment and negativity in politics and called on elected officials to uphold the highest standards of conduct; and

WHEREAS H.E.R. Halton has launched a campaign called Elect Respect to promote the importance of healthy democracy and safe, inclusive, respectful work environments for all elected officials and municipal staff that encourages individuals to participate in the political process; and

WHEREAS on June 5, 2025, the Canadian Association of Feminist Parliamentarians launched a non-partisan "Parliamentary Civility Pledge" to encourage all parliamentarians to commit to end workplace harassment and increase civility on Parliament Hill, modelled after the pledge developed in Halton by representatives of H.E.R.;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Township of Southgate supports the Elect Respect pledge and commits to:

- Treat others with respect in all spaces—public, private, and online,

- Reject and call out harassment, abuse, and personal attacks,
- Focus debate on ideas and policies, not personal attacks,
- Help build a supportive culture where people of all backgrounds feel safe to run for and hold office,
- Call on relevant authorities to ensure the protection of elected officials who face abuse or threats, and
- Model integrity and respect by holding one another to the highest standards of conduct; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Township of Southgate Council calls on elected officials, organizations and community members to support the Elect Respect campaign and sign the online pledge at www.electrespect.ca; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a copy of this resolution be sent to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, MP Alex Ruff and MPP Paul Vickers, the Ontario Provincial Police, and all Ontario Municipalities.

If you have any questions, please contact our office at (519) 923-2110.

Sincerely,



Lindsey Green, Clerk
Township of Southgate

cc:
Association of Municipalities of Ontario
Federation of Canadian Municipalities
MP Alex Ruff
MPP Paul Vickers
Ontario Provincial Police
All Municipalities in Ontario