



— OBCM —  
Ontario's Big City Mayors



## **Motion Supporting the Elect Respect Campaign**

**August 17, 2025**

**Moved by Mayor Marianne Meed Ward - OBCM Chair and Mayor of Burlington**

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 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 call 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 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.



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**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** Ontario Big City Mayors (OBCM) and the Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario (MARCO) support the *Elect Respect* pledge and commit to:

- Treating others with respect in all spaces—public, private, and online,
- Rejecting and call out harassment, abuse, and personal attacks,
- Focusing debate on ideas and policies, not personal attacks,
- Helping build a supportive culture where people of all backgrounds feel safe to run for and hold office,
- Calling on relevant authorities to ensure the protection of elected officials who face abuse or threats, and
- Modeling integrity and respect by holding one another to the highest standards of conduct.

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** OBCM and MARCO call on elected officials, organizations and community members to support the *Elect Respect* campaign and sign the online pledge at [www.electrespect.ca](http://www.electrespect.ca).