



August 31, 2018

VIA EMAIL ONLY (wgates-co@ndp.on.ca)

Hon. Wayne Gates, MPP for Niagara Falls
Room 361, Main Legislative Building Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1A5

Dear Mr. Gates:

Re: Niagara Falls, Ontario, Sewage Discharges into the Niagara River

As Chairman of the Niagara Falls New York Water Board, I am writing in response to your "open letter" that was recently sent to Ontario Environment Minister Rod Phillips regarding wastewater overflows in New York. We share your concern regarding the water quality in the Niagara River and are working hard to reduce sewer overflows. The Water Board is working closely with its regulators, elected officials, and others to do everything possible to improve water quality in the Niagara River.

As part of the effort to act as good stewards of the Niagara River, we would also like to draw your attention to sewage overflows emanating from Ontario, Canada. We welcome any information you may share regarding your efforts to take action in reducing the untreated or partially treated sewage that is currently discharged into the Niagara River from wastewater facilities in the riding that you represent, Niagara Falls, Canada.

While you quoted a figure for last weekend's overflows from Niagara Falls, New York, public data on overflows in the Niagara Region of Canada are updated only four times per year, so a direct comparison for that weekend is not publicly obtainable. However, in 2017 Niagara Falls, Ontario discharged over 834 million liters (over 220 million gallons) of untreated or partially treated sewage. By comparison, Niagara Falls, New York discharged about 945 million liters (250 million gallons). The scope of the problem is similar, with the biggest difference being that the Canadian discharges are less visible than those of the Water Board because of the locations where they enter the Niagara River. Accordingly, we look forward to seeing you become more active in addressing this issue in the territory that you represent. The hardworking employees of the Niagara Falls Water Board, various New York State officials, and many others have already been tackling this issue of improved water quality in the Niagara River for quite some time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel T. O'Callaghan". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Daniel T. O'Callaghan, Chairman

cc: NFWB.org website