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November 3, 2014

The Hon. Glen Murray
Ontario Minister of Environment and Climate Change
Ferguson Block
77 Wellesley St West, 11th floor
Toronto ON
M7A2T5

RE: Excess soils management in the Province of Ontario

Dear Minister;

The Ontario Environment Industry Association (ONEIA) would like to congratulate you and the Ministry for your recent commitment to finding a resolution to the issue of excess soils management in the Province.

Established in 1991, ONEIA is the business association representing the interests of the environment and Cleantech industry in Ontario. Our network of thousands of contacts includes senior executives at environmental technology, product and service companies, law, investment and insurance firms, institutes, universities and governments. Through their innovation and experience in Ontario and around the world, our members provide market-driven solutions for society's most pressing environmental problems. Our commitment is to provide constructive feedback to government based on sound science, sound policy and sound economics.

ONEIA has a very active Brownfield Caucus that has been raising the issue of excess soils management with your Ministry for the past several years. We recently formed a specific working group to address this issue. Its diverse membership includes consultants (with both P.Eng. and P.Geo. designations), lawyers, developers, remediation contractors, haulers and members of the landfill industry.

The Excess Soils Working Group has continued our discussions with staff in your Ministry's Policy Review Department in order to find a practical and workable framework for management of excess soils. While there has been some recent negative media coverage of this issue, we believe our discussions have laid the groundwork for a more constructive relationship between the Ministry and our industry that could lead to practical and effective solutions.

A number of our Working Group members were encouraged by your recent remarks at the CUI Canadian Brownfield Conference regarding climate change. We know that a comprehensive Brownfields strategy – including addressing the excess soils management issue – is key to restoring many urban areas and encouraging the infill and densification we need to make our cities more efficient and reduce their carbon footprints.

We would like to emphasize that ONEIA, our member firms, and our various advocacy committees and working groups are committed to working productively with the Ministry. We look forward to seeing you at our November 18 breakfast for Environment Industry Day, but in the interim – should your staff have further questions around this issue – we would be pleased to meet with your policy advisors and provide a briefing from an industry perspective. You can reach the chair of our Excess Soils Working Group, D. Grant Walsom, P.Eng., at (519) 577-9734.

We look forward to continuing and deepening our dialogue to work collaboratively with you and your Ministry.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Gill". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alex Gill
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Grant Walsom". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

D. Grant Walsom, B.A.Sc., P.Eng., QP
Vice-Chair, ONEIA Board of Directors
Co-Chair, Excess Soils Working Group