



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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Hon. Carol Mitchell
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
77 Grenville, 11th Flr
Toronto ON M7A1B3

OPEN LETTER

Dear Minister,

Many of Ontario's small abattoirs are unable to afford the cost of meeting your government's new regulations. I was very disappointed to discover that although your government announced \$25.3 million to assist them with the upgrades, more than 25% of this funding was never distributed.

I appreciated that you admitted to *Better Farming* last week that we were correct and not all the money announced to help small abattoirs meet the new regulations had been spent.

However, I was confused by your comments that the reason the funding had not been spent was that the program was "demand" driven. Minister, abattoirs across Ontario are in danger of closing or being closed because they haven't been able to access the assistance they need to meet the regulations. Your ministry staff said that there were no applications available and no point in applying because each year after 48 hours there were too many applications and they stopped reviewing them.

Therefore, I appreciated your commitment today in question period that "*we will always meet the demand of the applications*".

I ask you to immediately post an application on your website and provide a copy to my office so that we can distribute it to all the small abattoirs that are facing challenges. I look forward to the reports that you have met your commitment and provided assistance to all Ontario's abattoirs that apply.

Sincerely,

Ernie Hardeman, MPP
PC Critic for Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

