
PRESS RELEASE

**Brad Blair Calls for Commission of Inquiry into Corrupt Government Appointments;
Continues in Personal Pursuit for Public Accountability by Commencing \$15-Million Claim
Against the Premier and Top-Level Civil Servants**

Friday, September 13, 2019 – Toronto, ON – Citing the appointment of Ron Taverner as the tip of the iceberg, Brad Blair calls today for the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry under s. 3 of the *Public Inquiries Act, 2009* to inquire into corrupt government appointments and authorized to hold public hearings.

On November 29, 2018, the Ontario Government announced the appointment of Toronto Police Service Superintendent Ron Taverner, a long-time friend of the Premier's family, as Commissioner of the Ontario Provincial Police ("OPP"). Mr. Blair has been targeted by the Premier and his inner circle of staff and loyal bureaucrats since Mr. Blair commenced efforts to expose government corruption at the heart of the Taverner controversy, starting with an official complaint to the provincial Ombudsman. Mr. Blair's whistle-blowing actions ultimately cost him his career: on March 4, 2019, he was terminated by Deputy Minister of Community Safety Mario Di Tommaso, a key subject of Mr. Blair's Ombudsman complaint.

Mr. Blair makes his call for a public Commission of Inquiry in the wake of the utter failure of public watchdogs to expose corruption and hold public officials to account. The Ombudsman outright refused to exercise his public oversight functions. The Integrity Commissioner produced a report containing damning statements implicating top-level bureaucrats and the Premier's inner circle in a sham recruitment process designed to legitimize the appointment of Ford pal Taverner as OPP Commissioner – but the report has no consequences.

The Taverner appointment is not an isolated case. The Premier's Chief of Staff Dean French resigned in June amidst other appointment controversies, but French's departure does not bring meaningful accountability. An internal investigation by Ford of his own people will not provide the transparency and accountability the public deserves. Nothing less than a public Commission of Inquiry into the actions of corrupt government players and the collapse of our legislative watchdogs will restore public faith in our government and democratic institutions.

Despite the urgency of the need for a Commission of Inquiry, Mr. Blair does not have faith that the current government will establish one. For this reason, he is also pursuing private litigation to ensure he gets the answers that he and the greater public deserve regarding the Taverner appointment process and the retaliatory firing of Mr. Blair. Mr. Blair is continuing his Divisional Court application hoping to compel the Ombudsman to do his job, and he and his family have, as of today, initiated a \$15million lawsuit against the Premier and key public players implicated in the rigged OPP Commissioner hiring process and Mr. Blair's wrongful termination.

For further information, please visit our website at www.falconers.ca or contact Odi Dashesambuu of Falconers LLP during business hours at 416-964-0495, extension 248.

