



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Ontario Greens oppose plans for Kemptville Prison

KEMPTVILLE -- Ontario Greens are opposed to the Ford government's plans for a new provincial prison in Kemptville that will pave over 170 acres of heritage farmland. The last thing Ontario needs right now is a new prison — especially a new prison that is going to pave over farmland.

“We should be investing in building healthier communities instead of putting money towards new prisons,” Ontario Greens Leader **Mike Schreiner** said. “And at a time when food security is a huge issue and grocery bills are skyrocketing, we urgently need to protect the farmland that feeds us.”

According to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), mental illness rates are approximately 4 to 7 times more common in prison than in the community. A Green government would shift funding from the criminal justice system to mental health care services by :

- Establishing mental health-focused crisis response teams in communities across Ontario;
- Working with the federal government to fast-track the decriminalization of drugs;
- Ensuring that court mental health workers are available in all regions of Ontario to divert more individuals living with a mental health issue and/or substance use concern out of the justice system and into mental health and addictions services and supports;
- Ensuring that core mental health and addictions services are available to the incarcerated population, as well as consistent discharge plans for those who have been discharged, are on remand, or who have been sentenced;
- Improving and expanding training in mental health and de-escalation for correctional staff.

Critics have also noted that, as a small town, Kemptville does not even meet the site criteria for a provincial prison — given its lack of public transit, and its limited public and community services and infrastructure like roads and hospitals.

“Plans for the Kemptville Prison don’t make sense from a food security standpoint, a mental health point standpoint, or even a logistical standpoint,” Schreiner said. “Ontario Greens are committed to building a healthier, more sustainable province. And for that reason we oppose the plans for this new prison.”

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