

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
**Post-Election rally to stop prison construction and
save farmland in Kemptville and across Ontario**

3 June 2022 (Algonquin Territory / Kemptville, Ontario) – The Coalition Against the Proposed Prison (CAPP) and the Jail Opposition Group (JOG) are holding a rally tomorrow on June 4th beginning at 11:30 a.m. on the grounds of the former Kemptville Agricultural College and site of a proposed provincial prison located at the intersection of College Street. The purpose of the rally is to demand that the re-elected Ford Government stop its previous plan to build a prison on heritage farmland, as well as other costly infrastructure projects that pave over farmland as we face environmental degradation, food insecurity and supply chain interruptions.

The rally will feature a performance by the Raging Grannies, as well as speeches from a broad range of opponents to prison construction and farmland destruction. Those gathered will be collectively calling for a moratorium on the ill-conceived Eastern Ontario Correctional Complex and similar projects that will do great harm to the province and its residents. “No one asked for and many do not want this boondoggle of a project,” says Victor Lachance, a member of CAPP. “The government needs to release the hidden records on the selection of this site. Beyond full transparency, they also need to meaningfully consult with constituents in Kemptville, the region, and across the province on a better way to use farmland and build safer communities”.

“For nearly two years, we’ve simply been trying to establish the facts regarding how Kemptville was selected for this proposed prison. Concerned residents have filed numerous Freedom of Information requests to seek the facts and their requests have been repeatedly stalled or denied by the province; the level of secrecy surrounding this site selection process is unprecedented; the question we need to continue to ask is why?” states Kirk Albert, spokesperson for JOG. “We were told, that the proposed prison would bring local jobs and economic benefits to our town, and to date, despite our requests to substantiate those claims, we have received nothing. We were told it wouldn’t cost North Grenville taxpayers any money, but increased policing costs and infrastructure maintenance costs prove otherwise. It is clear why residents in Kemptville continue to have deep-rooted concerns”, adds Albert.

Opponents of the Kemptville prison project point to an alarming trend across the province of proposed infrastructure projects that will diminish the province’s agricultural footprint. In a time of climate crisis and increased loss of farmland, such moves are both irresponsible and wrong-headed. “Paving over farmland and bulldozing existing farm buildings doesn’t make any sense” observes Amanda Wilson, a Saint Paul University professor conducting research on food systems and prisons. “These farmlands could be used in so many other ways to bring benefit to the community and the environment. Save don’t pave”, she concludes.

For more information or to arrange media interviews in English or French contact:

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