

Wilson reintroduces Christmas Tree legislation

On Wednesday, July 16th, Simcoe-Grey MPP (an interim leader of the provincial PC Party) Jim Wilson was pleased to reintroduce legislation that, if passed, will designate the first Saturday in December of each year as Christmas Tree Day in Ontario. Wilson's original legislation, Bill 185, Christmas Tree Day Act, 2014, died on the order paper when the provincial election was called.

"I'm very pleased to be reintroducing legislation that recognizes such an important rural industry in our province," said Wilson. "The Christmas Tree industry employs thousands of workers across Ontario contributing substantially to the overall well being of many local communities."

In his remarks Wilson reiterated how the industry employs thousands of workers in farming, transportation and retail sectors and produces more than one million fresh, farm-grown Christmas trees for purchase each year with the same number of seedlings planted in annual harvests. He also explained that the industry has vast environmental benefits including the removal of 13 tons of airborne pollutants per acre per year, as well as creates a protective haven for a variety of bird and mammal species.

"When Ontario has more Christmas tree farms than any other province we should be proud of that fact," said Wilson. "27% of farms across the country are located in Ontario, many in my riding. It is time they receive the recognition they deserve."

Shirley Brennan, Executive Director of Christmas Tree Farmers of Ontario, has been working tirelessly to further this message. She explains that the industry is important both for its financial contributions to our province, but also because of the tradition it creates and its propensity to bring people together.

Wilson credits his constituent, Mr. Fred Somerville, owner of Somerville Nurseries and President of Christmas Tree Farmers of Ontario, for the inspiration behind this bill. Wilson was pleased to bring forward this legislation a second time and will continue to do everything he can to help push it through.