



YVAN BAKER, MPP

Etobicoke Centre

NEWS RELEASE

MPP Yvan Baker Tables the *Combatting Eating Disorders in Ontario Act* *Bill Would Require Disclaimer to be placed on Retouched Images or Videos*

NEWS

March 6, 2018

Yvan Baker, MPP for Etobicoke Centre announced today his introduction of a Private Member's Bill to help combat eating disorders in Ontario by fighting unrealistic and unhealthy conceptions of beauty and body image in commercially produced mainstream and social media.

The *Combatting Eating Disorders in Ontario Act* was inspired by someone close to MPP Baker and countless others who have struggled with eating disorders spurred by pressures to conform to unrealistic standards of beauty espoused in mainstream and social media.

If passed, the Bill would require that a "digital modification disclaimer" be placed on any photo or video advertisement and other commercial content where a person's image has been digitally modified or retouched, and would require consideration of disclaimers and other regulations to address unrealistic and unhealthy conceptions of beauty promoted within commercial film, television and video.

The Bill would also establish a series of awards under the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for individuals and companies who take meaningful action to reduce the prevalence of eating disorders, and require the Ministry to conduct an annual awareness campaign on eating disorders with an emphasis on promoting healthy perceptions of body image and beauty.

QUOTES

"I have witnessed first-hand the devastating impact of eating disorders and have heard too many stories of young people who have taken drastic action to conform to unrealistic and unhealthy conceptions of beauty espoused in our mainstream and social media. That is why I felt compelled to take action. My Bill, if passed, would ensure people are aware of unrealistic portrayals of beauty and body image. Through education and positive reinforcement, this bill would help eliminate some of the factors that lead to eating disorders."

- Yvan Baker, MPP Etobicoke Centre

"Every one of us plays in an important role in supporting the positive, mental, social and emotional development of our youngest citizens, our children. I congratulate MPP Baker for tabling this Bill, which will have a meaningful impact on reducing people's skewed perception of unrealistic body images in print advertising, television and other media. With these changes, Ontario joins other jurisdictions around the world that are starting a meaningful conversation



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about the negative effects of promoting unrealistic standards of beauty and taking steps to ban misleading advertising.”

- Wendy Preskow, Founder & President, National Initiative for Eating Disorders (NIED)

"As residents of Ontario there should be a reasonable expectation that the individuals and situations simulated in the promotion of consumer goods and services must either be accurately portrayed or should be clearly identified as fictional. Exposure to inaccurate depictions of false lifestyles can influence negative body image, create low self-esteem and project unrealistic ideals."

- Luciana Rosu-Sieza, Executive Director, Bulimia Anorexia Nervosa Association, Windsor ON

"This is an important initiative that will serve the citizens of Ontario well in helping to raise awareness related to the potential damage that false advertising in promoting unhealthy and unrealistic body images can have on our most precious resource, which is our children."

- Dr. Allan S Kaplan, Senior Clinician/Scientist, Chief of Research at the Center for Addiction and Mental Health, and Vice Chair for Research and Professor in the Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto

"The National Eating Disorder Information Centre (NEDIC) applauds MPP Baker's initiative to combat unrealistic ideals portrayed in the media through the use of photo-shopped imagery. Creating stronger media literacy awareness and building self-esteem and better body image, especially in young people is crucial. We know that poor self-esteem and body image can lead to individuals engaging in harmful behaviours such as dieting, which put people at risk for the development of an eating disorder.

- Suzanne Phillips, Program Manager, NEDIC www.nedic.ca

QUICK FACTS

- An estimated 1 million Canadians have an eating disorder (*Source: National Initiative for Eating Disorders, 2017*)
- Eating disorders have the highest death rate of any mental illness: 1 in 10 people with eating disorders die from their disorder (*Source: National Initiative for Eating Disorders, 2017*)
- Additional provisions of the *Combatting Eating Disorders in Ontario Act*:
 - Specific disclosure requirements pertaining to the disclaimer would be determined by the Minister of Government and Consumer Services through regulation.
 - The Ministry of Government and Consumer would have the ability through regulation to exempt certain commercial content that is not being used to advertise a product or service
 - The Bill would be enforced by the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services through consumer-initiated complaints and Ministry inspectors;
 - Parties violating the law would be fined up to \$25,000 for a first offence, up to \$50,000 for a second offence and up to \$75,000 for the third and subsequent offences



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- Specific requirements pertaining to the storage of original photos or videos, including the parties responsible for such storage, would be determined by the Minister of Government and Consumer Services through regulation.
 - The Bill would come into force one year after receiving royal assent, providing a phase in period to allow for compliance.
- France has required a similar digital modification disclaimer on advertising since 2017.

Learn More

[Bulimia Anorexia Nervosa Association:](#)

<http://www.bana.ca/>

[National Eating Disorders Information Centre](#)

<http://www.nedic.ca/>

[National Initiative for Eating Disorders](#)

<http://nied.ca/resources/>

[Facts about Eating Disorders from the Eating Disorders Coalition](#)

http://eatingdisorderscoalition.org.s208556.gridserver.com/couch/uploads/file/fact-sheet_2016.pdf

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