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**PRESS ADVISORY FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
TAVERNER APPOINTMENT & INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER REPORT**

**PRESS TELECONFERENCE 3PM EST TODAY  
ON BEHALF OF FORMER OPP DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRAD BLAIR**

Late yesterday, the Integrity Commissioner, the Honourable J. David Wake, released his report on his investigation into whether Premier Doug Ford breached the *Members' Integrity Act* in the appointment of his long-time friend, the Toronto Police Service Superintendent Ron Taverner ("Supt. Taverner"), as Commissioner of the Ontario Provincial Police ("OPP").

Mr. Wake dismissed the allegations against the Premier; however, Mr. Wake made many damning findings as it relates to this province's most senior bureaucrats and his report provides a detailed account of their significant involvement in the "**flawed**" (para. 242, pg. 63) process. In stating that "**[i]n fact, the process was not independent**" (para. 239, pg. 62), Mr. Wake recognized what has become self-evident to Ontarians across the province: there existed "**a preference [...] given to one candidate**" (para. 240, pg. 62). In examining the text messages between former Secretary of Cabinet Steve Orsini and the current Chief of Staff to the Premier, Mr. Dean French, Mr. Wake stated that "**[a]nyone examining these messages would have serious doubts as to the fairness of the process to the other candidates**" (para 241, pg. 63).

A biased or partial hiring process rigged in favour of one candidate over the others hardly represents a vindication of the government's efforts to install Supt. Taverner as Commissioner of the OPP.

From the outset, former Deputy Commissioner Blair has maintained that it is the conduct of these senior bureaucrats, who engineered a "**flawed**" process (para. 242, pg. 63), that requires investigation by the Provincial Ombudsman, Mr. Paul Dubé. The jurisdiction and focus of the Integrity Commissioner's mandate is by necessity the actions of politicians, under the *Members' Integrity Act*. It is up to the Ombudsman to rigorously investigate malfeasance by public servants who engineered a partial process aimed at ensuring the success of a candidate deemed by then Deputy Minister Torigian as "**not qualified**" (para. 110, pg. 29). This is why it is essential and in the public interest that the Ombudsman do his job. It is a gross injustice that Mr. Blair, a person who has dedicated over 32 years to the OPP, has been fired for raising the very same concerns about a flawed OPP Commissioner selection process, as are confirmed in Mr. Wake's report.

**Falconers LLP will hold a press teleconference today March 21, 2019, at 3:00p.m EST**

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*For further information, please access our website at [www.falconers.ca](http://www.falconers.ca) or contact Odi Dashesambuu of Falconers LLP during business hours at 416-964-0495, extension 248.*

