



**PRESS STATEMENT FROM B.W. (BRAD) BLAIR & LEGAL COUNSEL
REGARDING WITHDRAWAL OF SUPT. RON TAVERNER
FROM CONSIDERATION AS OPP COMMISSIONER**

March 7, 2019

Last night, it was announced that efforts to install Superintendent Ron Taverner as the Commissioner of the Ontario Provincial Police (“OPP”) have been abandoned.

While long overdue, the Premier and Superintendent Taverner have finally recognized what the rest of Ontario has known for some time: that a longstanding family friend of the Premier cannot serve as the head of the OPP.

“The OPP is made up of dedicated people working together for a common purpose of keeping communities safe. Their commitment proved unwavering during a difficult period these last few months and I have been grateful for the support within the OPP and from wider policing circles,” stated B.W. (Brad) Blair, former Deputy Commissioner of the OPP.

Mr. Blair’s efforts to protect the OPP from political interference have not come without significant personal costs. On Monday March 4, 2019, Mr. Blair was personally served with a termination letter by the Deputy Minister of Community Safety, Mr. Mario Di Tommaso, at the OPP Headquarters in Orillia. This termination purportedly brought the 32-year career of a widely respected police officer to an end.

Mr. Blair contests the legal validity of the termination of his employment as a sworn police officer of the OPP and he will seek full accountability and compensation for the actions leading to this termination. To date, neither Mr. Blair nor his legal counsel have received notice of any proceeding under the *Police Services Act*.

“Last night’s news vindicates Brad Blair’s unwavering resolve to protect the OPP from political interference. Brad Blair was right in insisting on transparency and accountability, in defence of the Ontario Provincial Police. It is sad in the extreme that the destruction of a good man’s career is the price to be paid for exposing political cronyism and abuse of power,” said legal counsel Julian Falconer.

Looking forward, the hiring process for the next OPP Commissioner must be conducted appropriately and not mired by the political interference and cronyism that sadly characterized the November 2018 hiring process.

