

April 11, 2024

Bill 18: Provincial Priorities Act Receives First Reading

Bill 18 will require provincial approval for federal funding agreements with municipalities

On April 10, 2024 [Bill 18: Provincial Priorities Act](#) was introduced in the Legislative Assembly. Bill 18 is intended to ensure the province reviews and approves any funding agreements made between the federal government and “provincial entities” (including municipalities) to ensure that the funding aligns with provincial priorities. This bill’s intent is similar to Quebec’s [Act Respecting the Ministère Du Conseil Exécutif](#), which also requires any federal funding agreements with municipalities to be approved by the provincial government.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Premier have both emphasized that Bill 18 is intended to ensure agreements between the federal government or federal bodies and municipalities do not contradict provincial priorities or infringe on provincial jurisdiction. In addition to municipalities, the bill will apply to all public bodies in Alberta, including public agencies, municipalities, Crown-controlled organizations, post-secondary institutions, school boards, regional health authorities, and Covenant Health.

The RMA has several concerns regarding with Bill 18, as it reduces municipal autonomy and increases the amount of red tape around federal grant funding. The nature of the legislation creates uncertainty for municipalities in terms of how current funding opportunities will be impacted. The RMA is hopeful that there will be an opportunity to work with the Premier and Minister of Municipal Affairs to develop regulations related to exemptions for certain projects and to design a provincial approval process that is as simple and streamlined as possible.

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