

What Can Be Done To Stop BIAs

BIAs CAN BE STOPPED ONLY IN THE INITIAL STAGES OF FORMATION!

You will receive a notice in the mail, one that is barely recognizable, let alone intelligible, which will give you two months to collect the signatures of 33% of all affected businesses in the event they wish to oppose its formation.

This notice is almost always mailed during November or December so that the petition process is most difficult: businesses are most busy around Christmas and cannot afford the time required to petition several blocks to get signatures, while the weather is particularly inconvenient to do so.

But remember, if you do nothing, and the 33% opposition is not documented, a BIA is automatically formed, then City Council appoints the executive. Taxes start and then... it is too late to stop them.

However, that is why, with the help and offices of the **Freedom Party of Ontario**, Marc Emery and Robert Metz are here to help you protect the integrity and independence of your business. We've worked with businesses for over 6 years in helping to slow the spread (and in some happy cases, stop them completely) in Ontario.

We can help --- but YOU must get involved --- now, before it's too late!

Freedom Party is an officially registered Ontario political party. Provincial headquarters are in London, Ontario, where a full-time knowledgeable staff is available to help you maintain your business freedom.

Freedom Party believes that the purpose of government is to *protect* your freedom of choice, *not* to restrict it.

**Don't wait
until it's too late.
Call us now.**

If you would like to
discuss BIA's further,
please drop in at
our offices at:

**364 Richmond St.,
3rd Floor,
London, Ontario**

or call us at:
(519) 433-8612

or write:

**Freedom Party
Box 2214, Stn. A,
London, Ontario,
N6A 4E3**

If you value
free enterprise and
freedom of choice
then find out about
**Freedom Party
of Ontario**



Freedom Party

**...after all,
freedom of choice
is what we're all about!**

WARNING!

BIA'S

**ARE
HAZARDOUS
TO YOUR
ECONOMIC
HEALTH
&
INDEPENDENCE**

Find out why...

What is a Business Improvement Area (BIA)?

BIAs are effectively a fourth level of government, added to our existing federal, provincial, and municipal governments --- except that with a BIA you have even LESS input than with other levels of government. Even when businessmen opposed to their BIAs have been elected to BIA executive positions in order to dissolve the BIA, City Councils have arbitrarily dissolved the executive and appointed an executive sympathetic to City Council's objectives.

Once a BIA is legally set up, it is IMPOSSIBLE to get rid of it: no legal or judicial methods of escaping its clutches are available. As the law now stands, once you've been conscripted into a BIA, you're stuck with it for the rest of your business life in your current location.

Who Benefits?

Primarily, politicians, bureaucrats and BIA executive. In London East, two aldermen have earned their livelihood as BIA administrators, while in downtown London, Mayor Tom Gosnell and his brother Bill (Gosnell Paving Stone) must be making a princely sum on all that BIA tax-paid interlocking brickwork.

The new administrator for the downtown BIA is former City Clerk Carl McNorgan, while the BIA administrator before him received a \$12,800 settlement after he quit as BIA administrator, despite the fact that his major accomplishment prior to quitting was the 1985 Hot Air Ballon Fiesta, which, budgeted at \$10,000, ran an extra \$40,000 over budget.

City Councils love the BIA concept because it permits them to set up this special tax (the BIA levy) to force businesses to pay AGAIN for services that City Councils should already be providing through existing business and property taxes & licences.

Sidewalk replacement, street furniture and civic infrastructure improvements (*all on government owned land, remember*) could easily be paid for with our existing tax payments. In 1986, the 16-block area of downtown London will pay over \$10,000,000 in business and property taxes to the city of London (while paying about \$10 million more to the Board of Education), and collecting

additional millions for the government in sales taxes, yet the only advantage we receive in downtown London is garbage pick-up twice a week instead of once.

Should we be taxed again when businesses contribute so much to City coffers already?

The only business and property owners interested in BIAs are the ones who know they can exploit their neighbours for unearned rewards. When they cannot persuade you to co-operate with THEIR plans, they will steal from you under the guise of a BIA. When they feel that their business is failing, or could do better with someone's else's forced participation, they will use YOUR success in an effort to bail out what they see as 'everyone's problems' in the neighbourhood. Only the weak, cowardly businessman who can't hack the world of competition, wants a BIA.

Worse, it is this kind of 'businessman' who will ultimately gravitate to positions of power on a BIA executive. They prefer to gain by political opportunism than by their sweat and effort.

Who Pays?

Every business who's forced to 'join'. Businesses who have no connection with retail sales (ie. doctors, dentists, accountants, lawyers, factories, wholesalers, offices, funeral homes, opticians, etc.) still must pay the BIA tax once they are conscripted.

Although businesses pay the tax, the major sponsors are often the property owners who RENT out to businesses. They are interested in interest-free loans to improve the front of their buildings, or coloured brick for the front of their property, things which will allow them to raise rents and sell their property for more -all with your tax payments! Obviously, property owners do not mind seeing their tenants pay an extra tax in order to prop up their property values.

How Much?

In 1980, downtown London's BIA tax represented 6% of the total business tax bill; now it is 20%.

BIA taxes escalate at an astonishing rate. In 1980, the downtown London BIA had an annual budget of \$100,000, which meant that the average tax per business was \$110 per year. By 1986, the downtown London BIA budget had increased to \$375,000, or \$350 per business, a 22% annual increase versus normal business and city tax increases of 6% a year.

In 1986, the downtown London BIA spent over \$100,000 on "administration" alone (27% of its annual budget), with an additional \$10,000 spent to renovate the BIA's office.

And this is just one example in one year!

The BIA tax, and its method of formation, are examples of *pure coercion*! Under a VOLUNTARY association, executive members must approach businesses one-on-one to convince them that the association is a good thing, in that business's *individual interest*, offering value for value, and gaining their co-operation through an exchange of ideas and *mutually agreed interests*.

Under a BIA, however, the APPOINTED executive operates like a dictatorship, requiring input from no one, knowing that it will get your money regardless of what you think. BIA communication becomes superficial and insincere, since *your consent is no longer required or important*.

Why Should I Be Opposed to Joining a BIA?

Aside from the obvious costs we've already mentioned, your independence as a small businessperson is seriously jeopardized by joining a BIA, which operates, at best, more like a mall where decisions are made on your behalf (but you pay the cost), or at worst, like a dictatorship, where ineffectual promotions, schemes, & administration soak up money you are entitled to and could use more effectively, while damaging your business's credibility and integrity.

BIAs can even get involved in political issues you may violently disagree with, but nevertheless they claim that they are acting on your behalf.

With your BIA taxes they can (and have) bought newspaper ads to attack opposition to the BIA, put out newspapers extolling the value of BIAs, oppose or support Sunday closings, oppose or support turning main streets into pedestrian malls, opposing or supporting free trade, opposing or supporting mall expansions in other business districts, etc.

Under a BIA, *you lose much of your freedom of association, if not all*.

Although City Councils are, in theory, overseeing BIAs, they routinely rubber-stamp the most outrageous budgets and programs, while the BIA routinely deviates from its budget in any way that seems appropriate at the time. *Remember, that's how City Council works!*