

# Public Interest Litigation: Do Not Get Slapped

July 31, 2013

By Jeff Cowan, Robert Eisenberg

## **What is SLAPP?**

On June 4, 2013, the Attorney-General of Ontario introduced new legislation with the purpose of better protecting freedom of speech by discouraging dubious lawsuits aimed at silencing citizens, organizations, or lobby groups critical of development projects.

A strategic lawsuit against public participation ("SLAPP") is a lawsuit initiated against one or more individuals or groups that speak out or take a position on an issue of public interest. This type of lawsuit uses the court system to limit the effectiveness of the opposing party's speech or conduct, intimidate opponents, deplete their resources, reduce their ability to participate in public affairs, and deter others from participating in discussion on matters of public interest.

*\*We wish to thank Robert Eisenberg, a summer student with WeirFoulds LLP, currently attending Queen's University, for his assistance with this article.*

For more information or inquiries:



**Jeff Cowan**

Toronto  
416.947.5007

Email:  
jcowan@weirfoulds.com

Jeff Cowan is recognized as one of Canada's leading public law litigators.



**Robert Eisenberg**

Toronto  
416.619.6287

Email:  
reisenberg@weirfoulds.com

Robert Eisenberg is a commercial leasing lawyer who excels at identifying potential landmines and devising clear, creative, and proactive solutions.

# WeirFoulds<sup>LLP</sup>

[www.weirfoulds.com](http://www.weirfoulds.com)

**Toronto Office**  
4100 – 66 Wellington Street West  
PO Box 35, TD Bank Tower  
Toronto, ON M5K 1B7

Tel: 416.365.1110  
Fax: 416.365.1876

**Oakville Office**  
1320 Cornwall Rd., Suite 201  
Oakville, ON L6J 7W5

Tel: 416.365.1110  
Fax: 905.829.2035

© 2026 WeirFoulds LLP