

# Public Interest Litigation: Do Not Get Slapped

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## **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.

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