



The Honourable Bob Chiarelli  
Minister of Energy  
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900 Bay Street  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2E1  
Attn: Alex Heath, SWERHUN Facilitation  
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April 29, 2014

Dear Minister Chiarelli,

We are writing to provide additional comments subsequent to the Ontario Energy Board's (OEB) community meeting in Thunder Bay. We appreciate the opportunity to hear the opinions of other people in our community; however, we believe there are many unanswered questions. As a result, we have serious concerns and strongly question whether the Energy East proposal is safe or environmentally responsible.

The Energy East proposal is worrying to us on many fronts, but there are three main concerns/questions we would like to have considered in Ontario's review of this project.

First, despite TransCanada's assurances about its pipelines' safety, the company has experienced numerous problems in recent years. In 2009, the same natural-gas pipeline the company intends to convert ruptured near Englehart, in northern Ontario, and its contents exploded. Another explosion occurred near Beardmore, near Lake Nipigon, in 2011. Then, in 2012, a materials engineer and an employee of TransCanada testified before the U.S. State Department that the company was using substandard practices in pipeline construction and poorly trained safety inspectors—a claim confirmed by a subsequent National Energy Board investigation. We request that the OEB report on all spill/leak incidences associated with TransCanada as part of the formal public report. We believe that the lakes and rivers in northern Ontario are at risk from spills associated with this pipeline, and we believe the public has a right to know the full track record.

Second, we don't believe the proposed pipeline is consistent with the great efforts that have been made by your government to position Ontario as a leader in the reduction of carbon pollution across Canada. Just this past month, we saw the closing of the coal plant in our community. We support the closure of the plant, and are encouraged by the great strides that have been made in Ontario to promote the conservation of energy and shift our energy system towards more renewable sources. Yet, in contrast, the increased oil production that will feed the Energy East pipeline is expected to generate up to 32 million tonnes of carbon emissions each year—the equivalent to the annual emissions of ALL vehicles in Ontario. Further, the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) recently released by the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing puts new emphasis on mitigating and adapting to climate change when making planning decisions. The PPS commits planning authorities to:

*“support energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change adaptation through land use and development patterns”. It further states that “planning authorities shall support energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change adaptation through land use and development patterns.”*

In addition, Ontario’s Northern Growth Plan (2011) recognizes:

*“the need for climate change mitigation and adaptation, which is of particular importance in the North. Average temperatures are rising more quickly in the North than in the rest of Ontario. This will alter the profile of the boreal forest and the sensitive ecology of waterways, lakes and wetlands. It threatens the region’s biodiversity, increases the risk of storms and forest fires, and shortens the transportation season for remote communities that rely on temporary ice roads to import essential supplies”. The Plan also requires that “the Province will work with the federal government, municipalities and others to incorporate climate change mitigation and adaptation considerations, where appropriate, into planning and decision-making.”*

We don’t believe converting this pipeline to support increased fossil fuel extraction and production is consistent with the mitigation of climate change impacts. We would like to see a summary in the final public report that illustrates where the Energy East proposal is supported by or in conflict with current climate change policy in Ontario.

Third, there is some debate in northern Ontario as to whether or not the pipeline should be supported because it will divert diluted bitumen from being transported by rail. For the most part, this dialogue is being undertaken with very little factual information. Is rail a viable economic alternative? Will rail be used in addition anyway? It has been speculated that the rail lines can’t ship the volumes a pipeline can... so is rail even being considered? What rights do we have or should we have as local citizens as to the volatility of products shipped through our communities? These are important questions and we would like to have additional research on the economic viability of rail versus pipeline presented in Ontario’s report on the Energy East proposal.

Thank you again for the opportunity to participate in OEB’s consultation,

Sincerely,

Julee Boan  
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cc:

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