



HALIFAX CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE
807 rue de la Grande

April 28, 2010

Honourable Bill Estabrooks
Minister of Energy
Department of Energy
4th Floor, Bank of Montreal Building
5151 George Street, PO Box 2664
Halifax, NS B3J 3P7

Dear Minister Estabrook:

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce would like to congratulate you on the announcement of Renewable Electricity Plan (the Plan) as a detailed program to move Nova Scotia away from carbon-based electricity towards clean indigenous sources of energy. The Chamber strongly supports your focus on strengthening Nova Scotia's energy security as well as improving our environment, while keeping focus on the importance of maintaining low electricity cost for customers.

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce has been a consistent long-term promoter of a renewable energy strategy for Nova Scotia. The Chamber has identified five major thrusts for sustainable energy in Nova Scotia: energy security, renewable energy strategy, energy policies, energy for the built environment and energy infrastructure. The released Renewable Electricity Plan addresses energy security in the province, creates a leading renewable energy strategy framework and presents an advanced energy policy - COMFIT.

The Chamber acknowledges community-based feed-in tariff (COMFIT) for 100 megawatts of renewable electricity projects as a major advancement presented by the Plan. The Chamber considers further development of community energy measures an important component of the overall renewable energy strategy. Introducing an efficient COMFIT has a potential to support community energy and to prove the efficiency of advanced energy policies in Nova Scotia.

While presenting different mechanisms to achieve an orderly transition to new, local, renewable energy sources, the Plan does not address the importance of the built environment as a major electricity consumer and the necessity for on-site electricity generation to achieve aggressive energy targets for buildings and houses in Nova Scotia.

This, together with other interdependent strategies identified in the document must be orchestrated as an integrated plan. The Chamber is interested in the status of these strategies and how we can provide input in their development. While an increased cap on net metering in Nova Scotia presents new opportunities to residents and businesses in the province, this measure has not proven its efficiency internationally in achieving renewable electricity targets.

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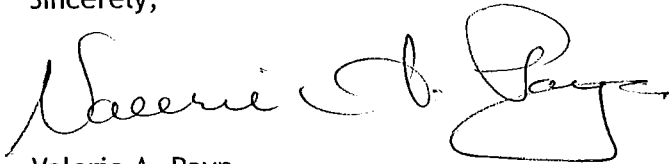
Halifax Chamber of Commerce re Renewable Electricity Plan
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The Chamber recognizes the importance of using locally-produced natural gas as a cleaner, quick-responding fuel, ideal for balancing intermittent supplies of renewable energy. That said, this balancing source does not address the existing transmission interconnection to the North American grid that may limit the economic opportunity of large-scale wind and tidal in Nova Scotia unless expanded.

The Chamber notes the Renewable Electricity Plan does acknowledge that increased transmission ties to New Brunswick and possibly other routes will be required. This is consistent with studies previously completed and/or underway by Nova Scotia Power and others.

Overall, the Chamber considers the new Renewable Electricity Plan a critically important step towards a sustainable energy future for the province. When deployed, it will create winning conditions for Nova Scotia in the globally competitive business climate and help its businesses to seize new economic opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Valerie A. Payn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "V".

Valerie A. Payn
President and CEO

cc Murray Coolican, Deputy Minister, Dept of Energy