



## **TAKE ACTION! The Council of Canadians is having a lobbying day of action Wednesday, May 20, 2009 in support of a green, secure and accessible electricity future for Ontario.**

People can play an important role in influencing government policy, especially when they are part of a coordinated effort – there is power in numbers! On **Wednesday, May 20** the Council of Canadians is asking you to join with other chapter activists across the province, telling Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP) that we want a green, secure and accessible electricity future for Ontario – a future with more conservation and secure supplies of affordable, environmentally-friendly power that meet Ontarians' needs.

**To see a video about the lobbying day of action visit our website at:** [www.canadians.org/energy/issues](http://www.canadians.org/energy/issues)

### **How can you get involved?**

#### **Email, phone, write, or meet with your MPP on May 20, 2009.**

You can get your **MPP's contact information** at: [www.ontla.on.ca/web/members/members\\_current.do](http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/members/members_current.do)

One-on-one visits with your MPP are another good opportunity to convey our message about important considerations in planning for the future of Ontario's energy. Call the constituency office and request a meeting with your MPP, or call, e-mail or write to them today.

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## **Here are the key messages to convey to your MPP in support of a green, secure and accessible electricity future:**

### **Trade matters**

- Trade rules pose risks to ensuring environmentally-friendly, secure and accessible electricity in Ontario.

### **Power sharing, public and community renewable projects**

- Interprovincial energy agreements and public and community renewable power generation will ensure Ontarians benefit from the power produced in our province.

### **Conserve energy and support local technologies**

- The cleanest energy is the energy we don't have to use – energy conservation and efficiency measures that are affordable, and supporting made-in-Ontario clean energy technologies are priorities.

### **No new nuclear**

- No new nuclear developments is an essential part of building a green energy economy in Ontario that meets energy security needs and is truly sustainable.

## Questions and Answers Guide for speaking with your MPP on May 20

### ***Question: Why do trade rules and U.S. electricity sector regulations pose risks?***

- Ontario isn't developing energy policy in a vacuum. International trade and investment agreements like NAFTA have a big – although frequently overlooked – impact on the production, distribution and export of electricity.
- These rules and regulations can undermine policy mechanisms that affect trade with the U.S. or the activity of U.S. and Mexican investors in Ontario markets, even if it is done to ensure green, secure and accessible electricity for the benefit of Ontarians. More privatization and increased cross-border trade gives these rules new salience.
- Policies such as requiring a generator to serve Ontario loads in priority of export markets ; refraining from exporting electricity in specific circumstances; or to adjust or cease production to meet certain environmental goals can be affected.
- Higher electricity prices in the U.S. make exports an attractive option for the private sector. Already, private companies – many of which are owned by foreign corporations – do the majority of Ontario's electricity exports. If exports increase, Ontarians will be forced to compete with U.S. markets, driving electricity costs higher with potential social consequences.
- With a growing demand for clean power in the U.S., electricity exports from renewable resources (such as wind and solar), or its attributes (such as carbon credits), will be particularly attractive. This can undercut provincial renewable use targets and undermine supply security.

### ***Question: Why should I support more interprovincial energy agreements?***

- Interprovincial power sharing agreements will help Ontario cut back on its production, meet renewable power use targets, and improve provincial energy security.
- Interprovincial power agreements are not subject to the same problematic trade rules such as those in NAFTA.
- These agreements are a cost effective alternative to more nuclear generation.
- There are significant economic and ecological benefits for both Ontario and Quebec in increasing electricity trade. A recent report released by the Ontario Clean Air Alliance finds that the potential benefit of increased electricity trade between the provinces exceeds \$1 billion per year. These benefits can be met without any additional hydroelectric projects in Quebec and take advantage of Ontario and Quebec electricity demands peaking at different times, as well as synergies between wind power, natural gas generation and hydroelectric sources.

### ***Question: Why should I support public and community renewable power generation?***

- More privatization in the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity increases the risks posed by trade rules to meeting renewable use goals, Ontario energy security, and affordable electricity. Public and community power must play a leading role in expanding renewable generation in Ontario. Public ownership and control at the local level includes prominent roles for municipalities and local public electricity utilities as well as First Nations, farmers and non-profit co-operatives.

- Other benefits of public and community power include the ability to reinvest “economic rents” in local improvements rather than corporate profits, the ability to focus on sustainable local generation for local consumption, and increased accountability and community support for renewable projects.
- Public ownership of generation, transmission and distribution facilities significantly reduces the application of international trade rules.

***Question: Why should I support no new nuclear developments?***

- Nuclear power poses an unacceptable risk to people and the environment; it isn’t clean, safe, or economically sustainable.
- There have already been a number of cases where Bruce Power, a privately-owned nuclear generator in Ontario, had to pay to get rid of surplus electricity.
- Every nuclear project in Ontario’s history has gone over budget at significant costs to taxpayers.
- Nuclear power results in nuclear waste that creates long-term storage and potential contamination issues.
- We don’t need new nuclear developments. Greater conservation and energy efficiency, more power sharing and rapid development of public and community renewable power generation can meet Ontarians needs.
- The Ontario government should revise its intentions to reserve a significant portion of Ontario’s electricity grid for nuclear power and start planning for a just transition away from fossil fuel and nuclear dependency, and support mechanisms for affected workers and communities. This starts with the Ontario government not signing a contract for two new nuclear reactors in June 2009.

***Question: How do these demands relate to the Green Energy Act?***

- In setting the direction for a number of policy undertakings and the Integrated Power System Plan – Ontario’s long-term energy plan – the Green Energy Act shows promise in recognizing the benefits of building a provincial “green energy economy;” one that helps meet ecological objectives and provides job opportunities.
- The Green Energy Act provides direction to better recognize the benefits of greater conservation and energy efficiency. We hope that this results in comprehensive, accessible and affordable programs.
- There remain outstanding questions with the Green Energy Act that need to be addressed. To what extent will the Act usher in expanded renewable power generation in private hands? We want to see more renewable power generation in public and community hands.
- While procurement contracts (an outcome of the Act’s Advanced Renewable Energy Tariffs) with private generators provide some protection from trade rules, NAFTA’s investment rules under Chapter 11 is a significant exception. With these contracts, power generation remains the property of the investors, exposing Ontario customers to future price and export risk.
- The objectives of the Green Energy Act contradict ongoing commitments to expand nuclear power generation in the province. If the Green Energy Act is to succeed in fostering a green energy economy, the Ontario government must commit to no new nuclear developments.



**For more information about the Council's energy campaign and energy integration issues in Ontario, visit [www.canadians.org/energy/issues/integration/index](http://www.canadians.org/energy/issues/integration/index), or contact Andrea Harden-Donahue, Energy Campaigner, Council of Canadians [aharden@canadians.org](mailto:aharden@canadians.org).**