

**Ministry of Energy,
Northern Development
and Mines**

Office of the Minister

4th Floor, Hearst Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto ON M7A 2E1
Tel.: 416-327-6758

**Ministère de l'Énergie,
du Développement du Nord
et des Mines**

Bureau du ministre

4^e étage, Édifice Hearst
900, rue Bay
Toronto ON M7A 2E1
Tél.: 416 327-6758



OCT 02 2018

Ms Rosemarie Leclair
Chair and Chief Executive Officer
Ontario Energy Board
PO Box 2319
2300 Yonge Street, 27th Floor
Toronto ON M4P 1E4

Dear Ms Leclair:

Rosemarie

As you are aware, the construction of the East-West Tie Line Project (Project) was declared a priority project through the issuance of an Order in Council (OIC 326/2016) that came into effect on March 4, 2016. Within that Order in Council, the description of the Project included an in-service date of 2020.

The Independent Electricity System Operator's most recent Needs Assessment, the "Addendum to the 2017 Updated Assessment for the Need for the East-West Tie Expansion", continues to recommend an in-service date of 2020 for the Project. Although the report indicates that interim measures may be able to address capacity needs until 2022, a delay past 2022 introduces increased risks to system reliability.

In order to avoid delays to the construction of the Project, it is important that the Ontario Energy Board acts expeditiously to issue a decision on the competing Leave to Construct applications for the Project. While I am aware that a combined hearing of both proponents' applications has commenced on October 2, a considerable amount of time has elapsed in order to get to this point. NextBridge filed their Leave to Construct application on July 31, 2017, and Hydro One's application was submitted on February 15, 2018.

While we are aware of the complex circumstances with respect to the competing proposals for this project and the challenges that this presents to the Board, the government would emphasize that this matter should be decided promptly through an efficient and fair process. I am confident that the Board will endeavour to render a prompt decision while of course ensuring that all participants are afforded the opportunity to engage in a full and fair hearing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Rickford".

The Honourable Greg Rickford
Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines