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VIA ELECTRONIC FILING AND EMAIL

Ms. Kirsten Walli
Board Secretary
Ontario Energy Board
P.O. Box 2319
2300 Yonge Street, 27th Floor
Toronto, ON M4P 1E4

Burlington Hydro Inc.
1340 Brant St.
Burlington ON L7R 3Z7
Attention: Stephen Shields

Dear Ms. Walli:

Re: Application by Burlington Hydro Inc. (“Burlington Hydro”) for an Extension to its Mandated Time-of-Use Pricing Date for Regulated Price Plan Consumers;

**Board File Number EB-2011-0137;
Submission of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (“CFIB”)**

In response to the above-captioned application, CFIB filed interrogatories, and has now reviewed the answers to its own interrogatories and those of Board Staff.

Background

CFIB is a not-for-profit public interest entity, representing the interests of more than 108,000 owners of small and medium-sized businesses, distributed across all industry sectors and all regions of Canada. Approximately 42,000 of those CFIB members are located in Ontario.

CFIB’s members mirror and reflect the regional and economic diversity of Ontario, as they include many commercial sectors such as agriculture, natural resources, construction, manufacturing, wholesale, retail, transportation, arts and information,

finance, insurance, real estate and leasing, professional services, enterprises and administrative management, social services, hospitality, personal, miscellaneous services and others. CFIB members will be affected by investments in conservation, generation and transmission that will be needed to maintain a clean and reliable electricity system for Ontarians, and by the cost of those investments as reflected in rates.

Small and medium-sized businesses have a significant impact on Ontario's energy profile. Approximately eighty-one percent of Ontario businesses employ fewer than five people. Small and medium-sized businesses account for more than half of Ontario employment and nearly half of GDP.

CFIB Members and Conservation Efforts

In a recent survey of CFIB members, focused on their energy needs and costs, the most important aspect of Ontario's electricity policy and decision-making noted by CFIB members is price stability.

CFIB and its members strongly support energy conservation. Of those surveyed, seventy-seven percent of small and medium-sized businesses have already implemented conservation measures including changes to lighting, thermostats, building alterations, investments in improved technologies, and changes to layout/production or timing.

Despite this support for conservation, small businesses differ widely in their types of appliances and hours of operation. A convenience store is different from a restaurant, a hair salon, a dry cleaner or an office. Ninety-two percent of CFIB members surveyed confirmed that they are unable to switch their time of use from peak to low peak periods.

We are, therefore, very concerned that the effect of TOU rates will have a negative effect on the bills of a majority of our members.

For those customers whose operations are focused within the typical business day and week, that pattern will result in bill increases that exacerbate the effects of the significant rate increases expected over the next several years, especially if additional effective, affordable means to increase efficiency (i.e. reduce consumption without reducing our ability to serve customers) are not accessible to them.

Our understanding of the responses filed by Burlington Hydro in response to the interrogatories in this proceeding is as follows:

- Burlington Hydro is confident that the increased customized messaging to its customer base, over the six month extension period, will help its customers to be better educated and better prepared to move onto TOU rates.
- Through better education and the adoption of TOU tools Burlington Hydro feels that it may be able to alleviate the projected impacts.
- Burlington Hydro is open to convening Education Sessions, to facilitate a dialogue between Burlington Hydro and its customers (including small and medium businesses), aimed at to helping to reduce the potential negative impacts of TOU rates.

A review of Burlington Hydro's proposed TOU implementation schedule, including the specific dates customers will be converted to TOU billing (chart located at pg. 10 of Burlington Hydro's response to Board Staff Interrogatories) demonstrates that the GS<50kW rate class will be the first class to have TOU rates implemented.

CFIB has concerns that GS<50kW customers, given the nature of their businesses, may have difficulty shifting consumption away from peak pricing periods. We are very concerned about the majority of Burlington small businesses who, it appears, will be faced with immediate bill increases and will be among the first in the province to sustain these increases.

CFIB therefore considers the requested delay to be in the interest of the affected GS<50kW customers. CFIB, therefore, is of the view that Burlington Hydro's application should be approved. The proposed extension and education program will at least enable provincial policymakers to rethink the plan to impose the current time of use regime on small businesses.

CFIB commends the concern that Burlington Hydro is demonstrating for small business customers, and would welcome an opportunity to support their planned initiatives through stakeholder participation and feedback.

We thank the Board for considering these submissions.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

FASKEN MARTINEAU DuMOULIN LLP



Richard D. Butler

RB/fd

CC: *Satinder Chera, CFIB*
Paula Zarnett, BDR Consultant