



Public Interest Advocacy Centre

1204-ONE Nicholas Street Ottawa, ON, K1N 7B7

mjanigan@piac.ca 613-562-4002 ext. 26 fax: 613-562-0007

September 26, 2013

VIA EMAIL and Mail

Ms. Kirsten Walli
Board Secretary
Ontario Energy Board
P.O. Box 2319
26th Floor
2300 Yonge Street
Toronto, ON
M4P 1E4

Dear Ms. Walli:

**Re: EB 2012-0175 - West Coast Huron Energy Inc. (WCHE)
Vulnerable Energy Consumers Coalition (VECC) Response to
Objection of VECC cost claim**

We are in receipt of the correspondence of Mr. Larry McCabe of West Coast Huron Energy Inc, objecting to the amount of the VECC cost claim submitted at the conclusion of the settlement in the above-noted proceedings. The grounds for the objection are the fact that the VECC claim is greater than the claims submitted by the School Energy Coalition (SEC) and AMPCO (AMPCO).

VECC notes that the amount of working hours spent on the WCHE application by each intervenor are roughly similar among the parties:

- | | |
|----------|------------|
| 1. AMPCO | 54.0 hours |
| 2. VECC | 61.6 hours |
| 3. SEC | 70.2 hours |

VECC's bill is greater due to the fact that there are different billing rates between VECC's team members and that of the other two intervenors and also the VECC disbursements which include travel expenses of \$676.44 by VECC counsel.

There is little difference in the time commitment by the VECC team in this proceeding and other proceedings involving utilities of similar size and duration of the ADR where VECC has claimed costs. In VECC's view, the participation of senior consultants and counsel contributes to the potential for settlement and a cost claim should not be arbitrarily devalued because of higher billing rates.

As a representative of low income rate and vulnerable consumers VECC is very conscious of the costs incurred in the regulatory process. We know the Board shares this concern and has pursued a number of different processes in order to see if complexity and costs of an application can be reduced. In this case the Board invoked an unusual process which added an extra (3rd) round of interrogatories and a teleconference. We are concerned that intervenors are not always canvassed as to whether such extra steps will have the desired objective. In many instances, like this one, we found the opposite to be the case.

Thank you.

Yours truly,



Michael Janigan
Counsel for VECC

Cc: WCHE – Larry McCabe – via fax – 519-524-7930
WCHE – Wally Curry – wcurry@erthcorp.com