

Colleen V. Goupil



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

To Whom it May Concern:

This letter is to complain about the energy rate increase that I, and all seniors, are facing with regards to Brantford Power Inc.

First, does not Bill 39 ensure affordable Energy (1998)? The ongoing rate increases are rendering this Bill moot.

Second, is not Bill 235 (Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010) supposed to “protect” society’s vulnerable seniors against unnecessary rate increases?

Third, is not Bill 35 (36:2) Energy Competition Act, 1998 supposed to protect consumers by promoting “low-cost” energy?

I put to this committee that ongoing rate increases are prohibitive and unconstitutional. Seniors live day-to-day on a preset income, usually set by the “Government of the Day” and see no increases, or very minor increases, year-over-year. Thus, when necessities are increased, something else must suffer, and all too often it is nutrition that suffers. Affordable energy is a necessity, but is being priced out of reach of seniors.

I submit that Bill 150, Green Energy and Green Economy Act, 2009 does nothing for the seniors. Yes, it is the way of the future, but what about the present? At the present, over 600,000 seniors in Canada live in poverty and these numbers are on the rise. Rate increases will contribute to that number.

Just a sample of recent energy rate increases include an increase of six to seven percent starting January 1, 2016. That on the heels of time-of-use rate hikes that took place November 1, 2015, and ahead of more rate hikes planned for 2016, as opposed to the

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CPP increase of 1.8 percent which is the cost of living measure used by Statistics Canada. Property taxes have increased, insurance rates have increased, grocery bills have increased exponentially and of course hydro rates increase three to four times per year. This proposed increase is an approximate 4.74 percent increase to my monthly energy bill. So how can a 1.8 percent increase in income cover all of these increased expenditures? It can't.

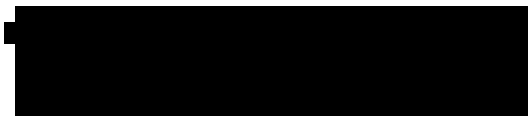
As a senior woman, the fact that the necessities of life are being priced out of reach of the most vulnerable is illogical. The affordable energy assistance program does not reach the majority of seniors. Those who do have pension income do not have disposable income. Many have to choose between hydro (which in some cases includes heat) and food.

I close with one final number, according to a study of Canadian homeless shelters, over 8.3 percent of shelter users are 55 and over and tend to have longer stays compared to younger adults. I put to this committee that these numbers are due in part to the ongoing energy rate increases. I shudder to think where this will end for Brantford's seniors.

As seniors, I believe we have the right to live out the rest of our lives without worrying about which necessity to do without. Unfortunately, if the ongoing rate increases do not stop, difficult choices will have to be made by the majority of seniors living in Brantford, Ontario who receive their energy from Brantford Power Inc.

Please reconsider the request for an increase. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Colleen V. Goupil, 