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Date: Saturday, December 9, 2017, 1:17:28 PM
To: <ConsumerRelations@oeb.ca>
Subject: Application EB-2017-0306 [CSE: zEp3Tf, TKT: pHZA8F]

For some reason unknown to me, I could not email a comment from your comment page. Would you please see that these comments are delivered to the proper people who look after comments re: EB-2017-0306. Thank you.

Amalgamations generally lead to fewer staff and increased costs for consumers. Despite their pledge that the amalgamation will not cost customers and the promise of a 10 year benefit of \$410M, it is inevitable that costs will rise. Their careful use of the word "benefit" is not defined and should be. A benefit may be simply be the declaration that the "increased level of service, more customer service reps etc has been provided.". They can then attach a dollar value of that "benefit" and declare that benefit worth a small or large portion of the \$410M. In other words, customers will see an increase that "would otherwise be more without the benefit of \$410M". It is hard to swallow such an argument in light of higher costs for virtually everything else. Any "benefit" is simply smoke and mirrors and should be defined if the amalgamation is allowed to proceed.

Regarding their request to use a special formula to set rates for 10 years, it is just an excuse to raise costs to consumers at higher rates than OEB would otherwise set in a normal review. This request should be declined as Union Gas and Enbridge simply want to hide their costs and this goes against all efforts that OEB undertakes to promote transparency.

I understand rate increases are inevitable but they should be regulated by OEB and not exceed the inflation rate. Their proposed 10-year period without OEB review allows them to mask costs with no incentive to control them. After 10 years, it will be too late to review such excessive costs.

Denis Meloche

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