

February 9, 2018

Ms. Kirsten Walli, Board Secretary

Ontario Energy Board

* 1. Box 2319 2300

Yonge St. Toronto, ON M4P 1E4

Dear Ms. Walli:

# VIA E-MAIL

**Re: EB-2015-0304 Policy Consultation of Wireline Pole Attachment Charges**

 **Comments of the Vulnerable Energy Consumers Coalition (VECC)**

Please find attached the comments of the Vulnerable Energy Consumers Coalition (VECC).

Given the large discrepancy to the detriment of residential consumers between existing rates and costs as determined in this proceeding, VECC supports this immediate implementation of rate changes. However, the Board must follow a procedure which meets the requirements of the *Ontario Energy Board Act*. Under s 78 of the *Ontario Energy Board Act*, rates must be set by means of an order. Under s 21(2), the Board may not make a final order until it has held a hearing. While the OEB’s draft report provides some notice of the Board’s intention to implement rate changes on a final basis, the OEB initiated this proceeding as policy review of miscellaneous rates and charges applied by electricity distributors and limited participation to a small working group.

The Board is, however, permitted to make interim orders under s 21(7). To implement the rate change effective the 1st month following the issuance of the policy, the Board should make an interim order implementing the new rates and establishing the deferral account to refund variances to consumers. At the same time, the Board should provide notice of its intention to make a final order implementing the new rates on a final basis. If, as VECC and the SEC propose, distributors are required to apply for a utility specific rate using the Board’s methodology, each distributor’s rebasing application will provide an opportunity to determine the applicability of the province-wide rate to the distributor on a final basis and adjust as necessary. Although a generic proceeding would generally be preferable, the benefits of local engagement and adaptation to local circumstances favor implementing the final rates though each distributor’s next rebasing application.

Yours truly,

(Original signed)

Ben Segel-Brown

Counsel for VECC

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