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Minister of Energy and Northern Development  
MPP Kenora-Rainy River

**Subject:** EB.2016.0315 Seasonal Customer Designation Removal

I have followed with interest for a number of years the Ontario Energy Board's move to impose a requirement for uniform fixed monthly service delivery charges and to eliminate Hydro One's Seasonal class and re-balance local delivery service rates in line with the determination that volumes of electricity consumed have no real impact at the residential level on the cost of providing and maintaining electrical service and that all users should share equally in supporting system costs.

The reason for the change is backed by sound data and reasoning, and will address inequities in the current way service charges are calculated and levied. As a long time rural resident (Hydro One R2 class) and someone using electric heat, I have been financially penalized for many years by paying much more than my neighbours for essentially the same service. A correction is long overdue.

With regard to Hydro One's latest report/submission.

The OEB should disregard any option that includes maintaining the status quo of one group of customers (Seasonal) paying less than their equitable share of costs simply on the basis the correction involves a large increase in their monthly bills. For too long those able to afford only a single, essential residence have been required to subsidize those who have the financial resources to own and maintain a second optional (primarily recreational) residence. If Hydro One and its current Seasonal customers desire financial assistance to offset higher energy bills, they should approach the government on their own and make the rather difficult argument that those with fewer financial resources should assist those with more.

As to Hydro One's two options for mitigation, I support a gradual move to the new, higher rates to ease the impact and the use of a billing credit applied on a monthly basis to achieve that, as it will provide financial assistance only to those actually facing higher monthly bills when compared to the same month in the previous year.

As to who should cover those costs, I would argue it should be the former Seasonal class customers themselves. They have long benefited from lower rates at the expense of year-round customers and this needs to end sooner rather later.

I do agree with Hydro One's argument that forcing it to move to full use of the Smart meter system or monthly billings based on actual manual on-site meters readings would impose unnecessary additional costs on those customers involved and should only be done as technology and communication infrastructure systems are able to be put in place at a reasonable cost.

Bob Stewart  
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