

Ms. Christine Long
Registrar & Board Secretary
Ontario Energy Board
P.O. Box 2319, 27th Floor
2300 Yonge Street
Toronto, ON M4P 1E4

February 21, 2020

Re: EB-2019-0188 North Bay Community Expansion Project

Dear Ms. Long:

Pollution Probe is in receipt of the notice dated February 4, 2020 for the above noted proceeding and hereby applies for intervenor status and requests that it be eligible for the recovery of reasonably incurred costs for its participation.

Pollution Probe is a frequent intervenor in Board proceedings and a copy of the current Annual Filing can be found on the Board's website at the following location:

<http://www.rds.oeb.ca/HPECMWebDrawer/Record/647508/File/document>

Goals and Objectives

Enbridge proposes to install approximately 27 kilometres of infrastructure over 10 years to expand natural gas in the community of North Bay and has requested OEB approval for a customer surcharge for this project. Due to the scale of the proposed facilities, Enbridge has classified this as transmission infrastructure requiring Leave to Construct approval from the OEB. Pollution Probe intends to focus on the consumer, environmental, policy and financial issues as summarized below.

- Maximizing the economic expansion of natural gas in accordance with the Board's feasibility guidelines can provide consumer access to cost-effective and low emissions energy that align with provincial policy to expand the natural gas distribution access. The applicant indicates that they propose to attach approximately 134 new customers (131 or 134 customers depending on evidence reference) of the 394 potential customers in the community in the first 10 years. This low customer penetration rate impacts the feasibility for the project and the surcharge requested to be collected from customers. Particularly given the large Ratepayer funded grant (\$8.7 million covering 86% of the estimated project costs) for this project, it will be important maximise penetration and to ensure that consumers do not bear the financial risk if attachments or project costs do not proceed as forecasted.
- There are significant environmental features along the proposed pipeline. The Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (previously MOECC) highlighted the importance of effective consultation and identifying environmentally sensitive features along the proposed pipeline early in the planning process. Union proposes to work with Stantec to develop

mitigation measures to minimize negative impacts to sensitive features identified. It is unclear what those features will include and what project budget has been reserved to mitigate additional negative impacts based on the work that Stantec will conduct and how this has been accounted for in the project budget. This project is economically sensitive and capital spending is proposed over a 10 year period making it especially sensitive to potential costs overruns.

- Enbridge indicates that the environmental plan filed with this application was created to meet the intent of the Environmental Guidelines for Location, Construction and Operation of Hydrocarbon Pipelines and Facilities in Ontario. The company only included responses from 3 agencies that are part of the OPCC circulation requirement. It is unclear based on the evidence if the OPCC agencies support the project or will have additional requirements once they complete their reviews to mitigate the environmental and socio-economic features along the proposed pipeline.
- Pollution Probe is pleased to note that Enbridge has indicated that DSM programs will be available to consumers in this community. However, no information appears to have been shared with the community on those opportunities during the canvassing and community engagement process. Provincial policy requires that all cost-effective natural gas energy efficiency opportunities be pursued and expansion to new consumers provides the best opportunity to ensure Ontario consumers are provided these opportunities. Provision of this information to the community could significantly increase customer penetration rates and reduce consumer costs. Once construction is complete and customers are attached, these consumer benefits will be lost if not addressed at this time.

Intention to Seek Cost Awards

Pollution Probe is a not-for-profit charitable organization. We receive individual donations as well as funding for consumer and research projects, such as on community energy planning, future of natural gas and regulated utility innovation, from a variety of public and private sources. Without the prospect of an award of costs, Pollution Probe's ability to participate in the consultation process would not be possible. Pollution Probe has been an active and valuable participant in proceedings before the Ontario Energy Board and will continue to coordinate its activities, where appropriate, with other parties which represent consumer, community and environmental interests in Ontario.

Pollution Probe respectfully requests your acceptance of this request to participate and confirmation that it will be eligible for its costs.

Notice

Pollution Probe requests that further communications with respect to this matter be sent to:

Michael Brophy
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Respectfully submitted on behalf of Pollution Probe.

Original signed by

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cc: Ms. Asha Patel, Enbridge (email via EGIRegulatoryProceedings@enbridge.com)
Mr. Guri Pannu Senior Legal Counsel, Enbridge Regulatory (via email)
Richard Carlson, Pollution Probe (via email)