

October 23, 2020

Ontario Energy Board
Attn: Christine E. Long, Registrar and Board Secretary

By e-mail and electronic filing

Dear Ms Long

Re: EB-2020-0091 EGI IRP Proposal – Interrogatory Process

I write on behalf of the Green Energy Coalition (“GEC”) and Environmental Defence (“ED”) to respond to Mr. Stiers’ letter Of October 21st in which he mischaracterizes our request to the Board and misstates the purpose of our request.

Mr. Stiers, on behalf of Enbridge, suggests that request “appears to contradict the evidence proposed by GEC/ED” and that we seek “exceptional and preferential discovery”. Both of these assertions are incorrect.

IRs do not seek information beyond the scope of the GEC/ED evidence proposal:

In our letter of October 20th we offered as an example of the type of information needed, “a copy of the results of the IRP in-field case studies conducted by Enbridge starting in 2017”. Mr. Stiers suggests that this example indicates that we intend the evidence of Mr. Neme to deviate from the outline we provided to the Board on August 5th.

Without knowing what Enbridge’s pilots’ goals were, how they were designed, and what data were collected, it is difficult to say definitely how this information would inform our evidence, but it is hard to imagine that these pilots would not provide us with information relevant to the topics we seek to address and provide the Board and the parties with information relevant to the Board’s deliberations. With that said, our expert has identified several ways in which they could be of assistance to the topics included in our August 5th outline of proposed evidence, including:

Outline topic: Is there a role for field tests and pilot projects to test IRP concepts?:

Learning about the scope and design of the pilots conducted to date, and their success or failure to affect peak demand or even to collect data such as hourly load shapes would assist the parties and the Board in understanding the state of knowledge and assist our expert in proposing the steps that may be needed to implement IRP going forward.

Outline topic: What is the relevance of experience with electric IRP (non-wires alternatives) to gas IRP?:

Enbridge has made the point in its evidence – particularly ICF’s report – that one reason there are limitations to the application of electric experience is that gas utilities don’t have the same quality of data on the peak hour impacts of different efficiency measures that electric utilities have (partly because of AMI data availability). Any data Enbridge obtained in its pilots on hourly load profiles of gas end use consumption and/or gas efficiency measure impacts, would help inform our evidence on the applicability of the electric experience.

Outline topic: Address the importance of identifying needs far enough in advance to allow for real consideration of alternatives to supply-side investments: How far in advance should forecasts of capital investment needs be developed?; How often should such forecasts be updated?:

To the extent that Enbridge’s pilots tested actual deployment of geotargeted efficiency measures and/or programs they might inform answers to the question of how quickly such programs could be deployed and ramped up and therefore what are the appropriate timelines for forecasts and screening.

Outline topic: How would a localized analysis be different than – and how could it leverage – system-wide efficiency potential studies?:

Enbridge and ICF made use of system-wide efficiency potential study results to inform conclusions regarding the potential to defer capital investments in T&D. To the extent that their pilots assessed localized potential, they may shed light on how much to rely on system-wide studies, and on trade-offs or benefits inherent in doing more detailed localized/geotargeted assessments.

Other topics:

Again, depending on what the pilots did, they could inform evidence on matters such as risk, and cost-effectiveness assessment and comparison methodology as well as other topics related to the proposed evidence.

Enbridge asserts that we seeking preferential treatment: Enbridge’s assertion is incorrect. We have sought information to inform the evidence our expert is preparing as the only intervenor seeking evidence. Our request was silent on the question of whether the option would be available to parties that are not submitting evidence.

Enbridge also suggested that it should have a reciprocal right to ask interrogatories before filing its reply. However, we require information from Enbridge to remedy a significant asymmetry of information, in particular, the fact that it has not yet disclosed the outcomes of its pilot projects. Enbridge does not have an equivalent justification to ask interrogatories of us prior to its reply.

Relief Requested:

We are cognizant of the Board's indication that there will be an opportunity for IRs at a subsequent stage in these proceedings, and of the limited time before we must file our evidence. Accordingly, after speaking to our expert, we are prepared to limit our request for information at this time to two intimately-related questions:

1. Describe the Enbridge in-field pilot programs designed and launched by Enbridge in 2017, including their goals or objectives, what IRP questions or uncertainties they were designed to help address, how they were designed and deployed, and what data were collected; and
2. Provide a copy of any results of the IRP in-field case studies.

These are not onerous requests. The Company must already have write-ups of goals and designs of the pilots. If results are available – and the Company previously suggested they could be available in 2019 – the Company should already have reports or memos or other documentation of those results. In short, we see no reason why this cannot be done now with very little effort by the Company. Furthermore, this information would certainly be sought in a subsequent stage of these proceedings. Accordingly, providing the information now will not require incremental effort by Enbridge.

In my letter of October 20th I indicated that I had discussed this with counsel for Enbridge who was not in a position to provide any firm commitments but indicated that we could submit IRs to the company at this time and the company may be prepared to consider responding. The tone of Mr. Stiers' letter suggests that Enbridge is unlikely to provide answers absent a Board directive. Accordingly, we respectfully request a direction from the Board requiring the company to file the information outlined above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Poch", with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Poch

Cc: all parties