

3/2/21

Ontario Energy Board
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P.O. Box 2319
Toronto, Canada
M4P1E4

James Follebout

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a U.S. citizen living in Michigan and my wife and I own a seasonal cottage on Manitoulin Island. The address is [REDACTED] We are Hydro One customers, account [REDACTED] We received a notification on February 26th, 2021 (although the letter sent is dated February 10th, mail delivery from CA to U.S. takes at least 2 weeks). In any case I am writing to inform you that a rate increase of 70% on our monthly bill is outrageous and basically unaffordable for retirees on fixed incomes. Our bill would go from \$38.00 per month to \$111.00 per month and that is only for delivery, NOT for any usage whatsoever. We are aware utilities must be increased but not at a 70% increase especially on people who can least afford it, retirees. And many cottage owners are just that, retirees. We would not be even able to sell our 620 sq. ft. cottage when possible buyers find out there would be a \$2,000.00 or more hydro bill for their 5 month usage of that cottage. It would become unsellable. We cannot sell it nor even make use of the cottage ourselves at these abominable rates.

We are asking, no, we are begging, you reconsider the seasonal rate usage. We are not opposed to an increase in rate, just not the 70% proposed rate that you would have us pay. It is unconscionable to make people who have a small cottage pay that type of increase in order to simply pay for hydro usage when the cottage is only actually used for 5 months out of the year. We simply cannot afford this increase and find it to be cruel to use the backs of retirees to pay for such extraordinary increases. Why not raise the increase across the board on all hydro users. That would seem more fair and equitable and would surely be a way to keep the Seasonal Rate Class in use. Or, still keeping the Seasonal Rate Class, put a much smaller increase of say 20% or 25 %, so to at least let cottagers be able to use their cottages. You must be aware that cottagers, whether Canadian or U.S. citizens, pump a great deal of income into local, and even provincial coffers and economies from groceries, gasoline, and overall everyday purchases. This needs to be taken into consideration as likely most cottagers will not be able to afford this increase and would likely shut down their cottages altogether, as would we. This is not a viable solution to your revenue problem. We believe you will lose more than you will gain from this fiasco of eliminating the Seasonal Rate from integrity alone.

In closing, again, we beg you to reconsider your cancellation of the Seasonal Rate. We love our cottage and our Canadian neighbors. It would be a great heartbreaker for us to lose the use of our little cottage simply due to unaffordable hydro bills but that is exactly what it would come down to.

Thank you for your time and please do have a heart and rethink the awful situation you have put many, if not most cottagers into. I am sure if you really want to there is a much more equitable solution you could come up with in finding a solution to this problem without ripping the hearts out of the people who can least afford this wholly inequitable solution.

