

-- Name --

Adam Howe

-- Do you reside in the impacted service area? -- Yes

-- Comments --

To: Ontario Energy Board

Re: File Number EB-2024-0115 – Hydro Ottawa Limited Application for 2026 Distribution Rate Increase

Date: May 14, 2025

I am writing to strongly oppose Hydro Ottawa Limited's application to increase electricity distribution rates and other charges effective January 1, 2026.

The proposed increase, which would raise the average residential bill by \$6.08 per month and the average small business bill by \$14.57 per month, comes at a time when many residents and businesses are already struggling with high inflation and escalating living costs. For many in our community, every additional dollar spent on utilities means less for essentials like food, housing, and transportation. This increase would only deepen the financial strain on families, seniors, and small businesses already working hard to make ends meet.

Hydro Ottawa's application also seeks approval for new rate riders, the creation of new deferral and variance accounts, and changes to miscellaneous charges. These technical adjustments, while perhaps justified from an accounting perspective, ultimately translate into higher bills for consumers who have little say in how these balances are managed or accrued.

The justification that the new rate framework is tied to inflation and efficiency does not reflect the economic reality faced by ratepayers. Year-over-year increases, even if modest, accumulate and erode affordability. The Ontario Energy Board's mandate is to ensure that energy remains reliable and affordable for all Ontarians ("Consumers are well served if pricing[...]they receive from their energy utilities are fair and reasonable."). Approving this application would contradict that mandate by placing an even greater burden on those least able to absorb it.

I urge the Ontario Energy Board to reject Hydro Ottawa's application for a rate increase. Instead, Hydro Ottawa should be required to follow the same process that any other utility follows - find efficiencies within its existing budget and prioritize cost control, rather than passing additional costs onto customers. The Board must consider the broader economic impact on the community and protect the interests of the public it serves.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Adam Howe

