

August 1, 2025

Mr. Ritchie Murray  
Acting Registrar  
Ontario Energy Board  
2300 Yonge Street, 27<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, ON M4P 1E4

Dear Mr. Murray:

**Re: Enbridge Gas Inc.  
Application for Approval of Franchise Agreement and New Certificate of  
Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) - City of Guelph  
Ontario Energy Board File No. EB-2025-0058**

Enbridge Gas Inc. (Enbridge Gas) writes in response to the letter dated July 29, 2025 from eMERGE Guelph Sustainability (eMERGE Guelph) which requested that the above-noted proceeding be placed in abeyance until the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) has confirmed whether it will hold a generic hearing to review the 2000 Model Franchise Agreement.

For the reasons described below, in Enbridge Gas' view and contrary to eMERGE Guelph's assertions, an adjournment (if ordered) would result in regulatory inefficiencies / burdens, and there is no reason to tie the progress of a franchise agreement / CPCN hearing that is nearing its final steps to a potential review of generic issues in the future. There is sufficient information on the record to allow parties to proceed to final submissions and the OEB to make its decision thereafter, and Enbridge Gas respectfully submits that the OEB should issue its next procedural order accordingly to ensure the efficient and orderly completion of this hearing. Quoting from the OEB's *Protocol for Adjusting Adjudicative Timelines*, "An application is placed in 'abeyance' when a proceeding can no longer continue until an event occurs".<sup>1</sup> There is nothing preventing the proceeding from continuing in this case.

In requesting an abeyance, eMERGE Guelph references a statement made by the OEB in Procedural Order No. 1 that it is "considering whether there is a need for a review of generic issues related to the Model Franchise Agreement, and if so, the scope and appropriate timing of any such review". It is Enbridge Gas' understanding that the OEB has been "considering" such a review for quite some time. At this point, it would be speculative and unproductive to adjourn this proceeding – which is focused on issues specific to the City of Guelph and this application – based on the possibility of generic issues being examined at some future time.

Given the many ongoing and planned consultations at the OEB and the recent ministerial directives (with various workstreams / timelines for the OEB to meet) tied to the Integrated Energy Plan, it would seem challenging, to say the least, to add on another generic proceeding in the near-term. Compounding that challenge is the upcoming municipal election cycle in Fall 2026, and the expectation that municipal councils will enter caretaker mode in the months prior (i.e., avoiding major deliberations and decisions, such as advancing any positions related to the

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<sup>1</sup> [Protocol for Adjusting Adjudicative Timelines](#), page 3, footnote 4

Model Franchise Agreement, that could bind future municipal councils). All that is to say, whether or not a generic review of the Model Franchise Agreement will occur (and if so, when and based on what process / scope) is a decision with complex inputs and implications, and the OEB should not have to tie that decision point to the normal progress of an in-flight franchise agreement / CPCN case where generic issues are out of scope.

In addition, Enbridge Gas anticipates filing more than 20 applications between now and the end of 2026 dealing with franchise agreement renewals which will take considerable time and resources at the OEB. Granting abeyance in this proceeding may invite similar requests in other proceedings, risking a bottleneck that is difficult for Enbridge Gas and the OEB to manage. There are of course all the filings to be made beyond the franchise agreement / CPCN context, such as leave to construct applications related to the remaining Natural Gas Expansion Program Phase 2 projects (for which any required OEB applications must be made by year end 2025, as prescribed by regulation) that may compete for the same internal resources. Enbridge Gas' regulatory and other internal teams are already stretched thin (and likely true for the OEB also) across many different applications / initiatives. The ability to prepare for and manage regulatory proceedings based on a predictable workplan over time is essential. In this regard, contrary to eMERGE Guelph's assertions, the practical effects and implications of abeyance would be prejudicial to Enbridge Gas.

Enbridge Gas reminds the OEB that this application is simply for purposes of renewing a specific, existing franchise agreement in the form of the OEB's Model Franchise Agreement, and updating the applicable CPCN in order to continue to provide efficient and cost effective service to almost 50,000 natural gas customers within the City of Guelph. Intervenors in this case have already improperly sought to expand the scope of this proceeding and adduced irrelevant evidence on the record, contrary to the OEB's prior procedural directions. Enbridge Gas will address the relevance arguments in final submissions, but for the purposes of this letter, urges the OEB to not entertain the further delays sought by eMERGE Guelph.

Should you have any questions on this submission, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,

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