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April 24, 2026

Ritchie Murray  
Acting Registrar  
Ontario Energy Board  
2300 Yonge Street, P.O. Box 2319  
Toronto ON, M4P 1E4

Dear Mr. Murray,

**RE: EB-2025-0156 Draft Updates to Non-Wires Solutions Guidelines  
Comments of Energy Probe**

In its letter of March 21, 2026, the OEB invited parties to provide comments by April 21 on the draft updates to the Non-Wires Solution (NWS) Guidelines including new guidance for Stream 2 local electricity demand side management (eDSM) programs. At the request of the Working Group the due date for comments was extended to April 24. The following are the comments of Energy Probe Research Foundation (Energy Probe).

### **General Comments**

There is an assumption that all NWS will provide the same reliability and power quality as wires solutions. Energy Probe believes that this unlikely, particularly if the NWS is provided by a third party. Neither the NWS Guidelines nor the new Appendix addresses situations when the NWS do not perform as promised. There should be at least a caution to distributors that costs may be subject to disallowance if the promised benefits of NWS are not achieved. Otherwise, distributors could assume that ratepayers will bear all the risks.

### **Non-Wires Solutions Guidelines for Electricity Distributors (DRAFT)**

*“The OEB suggests the following steps when conducting a pre-assessment:*

- *Identify the system need and its timing.*

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- *Identify potential solutions to meet the need: traditional infrastructure solution(s) and NWS.*
- *Assess whether the potential solutions can technically meet the identified system need, taking into account factors such as size of the need (e.g., level of demand/energy that must be provided or reduced) and required timing.*
- *Estimate (at a high level) the cost/economic feasibility of those solutions that are technically viable. If this estimate indicates that one solution is very clearly preferable by a large margin, it may not be necessary to refine cost and benefit estimates and complete a detailed benefit-cost analysis (BCA).”<sup>1</sup>*

### Energy Probe Comments

Energy Probe that a step should be added to the list that identifies the workarounds that may be needed if the NWS after implementation does not deliver the required technical requirements such as needed reliability, power quality or quick response to changing load conditions.

### **Appendix to Non-Wires Solutions Guidelines: Stream 2 Local eDSM Programs (DRAFT)**

*“A distributor provides reporting to both the IESO and the OEB, including reporting on Program spending, participation, and unverified peak demand and energy savings. Reporting to the IESO supports disbursement of Global Adjustment funds and IESO EM&V activities. The IESO conducts Program EM&V that includes annual reporting on verified peak demand and energy savings and program cost-effectiveness. Reporting to the IESO also supports Program monitoring, including identification if a Program is underperforming. Under defined conditions, underperformance will require a distributor to develop a mitigation plan (which could include Program adjustments) that must be endorsed by the IESO for the Program to continue. Reporting to the OEB is provided by the distributor annually on an informational basis, typically as part of an IRM, Annual Update, or Cost of Service application. In addition to the reporting information provided by the distributor to the IESO, the report to the OEB includes the results of IESO EM&V (most recent, as available), and any Program adjustments including those related to a mitigation plan. If Program adjustments can be managed within the budget in the OEB’s original Program approval, then OEB approval of the Program adjustments is not required.”<sup>2</sup>*

### Energy Probe Comments

Energy Probe believes that annual reporting to the OEB should not be only on an informational basis. OEB staff and interested parties should have an opportunity to examine performance of programs and propose corrective action if a program is underperforming. If a distributor

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<sup>1</sup> Non-Wires Solutions Guidelines for Electricity Distributors (DRAFT), Page 12

<sup>2</sup> Ontario Energy Board | Appendix to Non-Wires Solutions Guidelines: Stream 2 Local eDSM Programs (DRAFT), Pages 14-15

proposes mitigative action, then OEB staff and interested parties should have an opportunity to examine the proposal.

*“Subsequently, Program close-out is done through a distributor’s request to the OEB for disposition of the balance in the eDSMVA, typically as part of a distributor’s next Cost of Service application following the end of the Program.”<sup>3</sup>*

### Energy Probe Comments

The next Cost of Service application may not be for 5 or 10 years. Energy Probe submits that is too long. The balance in eDSMVA should be disposed on an annual basis. Longer periods increase risks for distributors and ratepayers.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of Energy Probe.

Tom Ladanyi  
Consultant representing Energy Probe

cc. Patricia Adams (Energy Probe)  
Michael Parkes (OEB Staff)

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Page 15