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LETTER OF COMMENT

Comments:

To the Ontario Energy Board, I am writing as a Hydro One residential customer in Smiths Falls, Ontario, to express my strong opposition to the proposed electricity rate increases for 2028 through 2032. At a time when Canadians are already struggling with an increasingly unaffordable cost of living, I find it deeply concerning that Hydro One is seeking approval for substantial additional increases to an essential household service. My household currently pays approximately $200 per month for electricity. Under Hydro One's proposed rate structure, urban-density residential customers could face cumulative delivery charge increases of approximately $31 per month by 2032, based on the published typical-consumption examples. That represents nearly $380 in additional annual costs, assuming the proposal is approved as presented. While these amounts may appear relatively modest when considered individually, they cannot be viewed in isolation. Canadian households are facing sustained financial pressure from rising grocery prices, housing costs, property taxes, insurance premiums, transportation expenses, and countless other necessities. Each additional increase erodes the limited disposable income families have remaining. What may appear to a utility as a manageable adjustment can represent yet another financial burden for households already making difficult decisions about how to allocate their income. Electricity is not a discretionary expense. Families cannot simply choose to stop heating their homes, refrigerating their food, or using the electricity necessary for everyday life. Unlike many other expenses, customers have limited ability to avoid these charges or seek a competing provider offering better rates. That reality places a significant responsibility on Hydro One and the Ontario Energy Board to ensure that every proposed increase is genuinely necessary, reasonable, and affordable. I recognize that maintaining and modernizing Ontario's electricity infrastructure requires significant investment. However, acknowledging the need for infrastructure improvements should not automatically translate into accepting the full financial burden being passed along to residential customers. Hydro One should be expected to demonstrate that it has exhausted reasonable opportunities to improve operational efficiency, control administrative expenses, prioritize essential projects, and reduce unnecessary costs before requesting additional revenue from households. I am also concerned about the disproportionate impact on urban-density residential customers, who face substantially larger proposed distribution increases than certain other residential classifications. While I understand that rate protection programs and service costs differ across customer groups, the Board should carefully examine whether the resulting financial burden is equitable and sufficiently justified. More broadly, I believe the regulatory process needs to place greater emphasis on cumulative affordability. A proposed

increase should not be evaluated solely against Hydro One's operating requirements or investment plans. It should also be assessed against the financial reality of the people being asked to pay it. There must be a point at which the continued escalation of essential living expenses is recognized as unsustainable. Families are routinely expected to absorb rising costs, tighten their budgets, and make sacrifices. It is reasonable to expect large, regulated utilities to demonstrate comparable financial discipline and restraint. I therefore urge the Ontario Energy Board to: 1. Reject the proposed increases unless Hydro One can clearly demonstrate that they are necessary, efficient, and represent the lowest reasonable cost to customers. 2. Require a thorough examination of operational spending, capital investment priorities, and opportunities for cost reductions. 3. Give meaningful weight to household affordability and the cumulative financial pressures facing Ontario residents. 4. Examine the fairness of the significantly larger proposed increases affecting urban-density residential customers. 5. Consider whether essential infrastructure investments can be phased or otherwise managed to reduce the immediate financial burden on households. The affordability challenges facing Canadians are not theoretical. They are being experienced in homes across Ontario every single day. The Ontario Energy Board exists in part to protect the interests of electricity consumers. I ask that it exercise that responsibility by placing affordability, accountability, and fairness at the centre of its decision. Ontario families cannot continue to be treated as an unlimited source of additional revenue whenever operating costs or investment requirements increase. Thank you for considering my concerns. Sincerely, A concerned Hydro One residential customer Smiths Falls, Ontario

Name: Jeff McFayden

Do you reside in the impacted service area?: Yes

Was AI used for the letter of comment?: Yes