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February 24, 2021

Ontario Energy Board
Board Secretary
P.O. Box 2319
2300 Yonge Street, 27th Floor
Toronto ON M4P 1E4

By email: boardsec@ontarioenergyboard.ca

Hydro One Networks Inc. - OEB File #: EB-2020-0246

Elimination of Seasonal Rate Class and Moving Seasonal Customers to Low Density (R2) Class

We are writing on behalf of our members with regard to your decision to eliminate the seasonal rate class and transfer around 80,000 low density seasonal customers to the Low Density (R2) Class, which will double their annual hydro costs.

The Georgian Bay Association (GBA) is an umbrella organization for 18 community associations along the east and north shores of Georgian Bay, representing around 3,000 families. We have been advocating on behalf of our land-owning members for over 100 years and estimate that we reach and influence approximately 18,000 residents of the Georgian Bay. Our mandate is to work with our water-based communities and other stakeholders to ensure the careful stewardship of the greater Georgian Bay environment.

Many of those we represent are Hydro One customers, and roughly 90% of those are currently low density seasonal rate customers. We have been working closely with the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA) on this matter over the years, and are therefore aware of the numerous appeals you have received not to cancel the seasonal rate, and cause harm to almost 80,000 Hydro One customers.

You have chosen to ignore these appeals despite the fact that it is standard practice in Canada to extend basic infrastructure services to remote areas of the country without overburdening recipients with undue costs. Other examples of such services are road and telecom.

You may be under the mistaken impression that seasonal hydro customers are inherently well to do and can therefore readily afford a 100% increase in their hydro costs. Please note that while some of our members may be considered well off, many are not, and share their seasonal residences amongst extended family members, and sometimes renters, in order to be able to continue to afford them.

Accordingly, please consider implementing the following provisions with regard to the impositions of this change for these new Low Density (R2) Class customers:

1. Delay the start date to January 1, 2023; and
2. Phase in the increased costs at 10% per annum over 10 years.

Having made this decision to overburden those residing in remote areas with the costs of a basic infrastructure item (hydro), we respectfully request that the least you can do is to spread the impact over a long period to reduce the harm that will be caused.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rupert Kindersley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Rupert Kindersley
Executive Director

Copy to:

Hydro One Networks

Regulatory@HydroOne.com