# Transforming Ontario's Electricity Sector

Lobby preparations and breakfast at Queen's Park Monday, September 25, 2023 and Tuesday, September 26, 2023

**Breakfast co-hosts a**re MPP Jamie West, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, Citizens' Climate Lobby, Climate Fast, For Our Grandchildren, and the Ontario Climate Emergency Campaign.







7:30 am to 9:00 am Soft Start Land Acknowledgement Welcome from our cohost MPP Jamie West Youth Guest – Zoe Keary-Matzner Guest Speaker – Dr. Mili Roy: CAPE Ontario and OCEC Conference Facilitator: Vanessa Fiore

The Earth just passed through the hottest three months on record. Canada is experiencing the most severe wildfire season on record. We are in a climate emergency. The Ontario government is preparing investments for electricity supply for the long term. Now is the time for citizens to engage with decision-makers and advocate for energy and climate plans that create a sustainable future.

Please arrive at Queen's Park by **7:00 am** to allow yourself plenty of time to get through security. **Photo I.D.** is required to get into Queen's Park

We'd like to begin our gathering today by acknowledging that the work we support stretches across the homes of many First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples on Turtle Island and that Indigenous knowledge and honouring of all treaties must be significantly incorporated as part of meaningful action on the climate crisis. We acknowledge that Indigenous people are traditional owners and custodians of this land and that for decades they have been the first line of defence against climate breakdown. For example Indigenous resistance has stopped at least 1.8 billion metric tonnes of greenhouse gas pollution on Turtle Island.

Nous aimerions commencer notre réunion d'aujourd'hui en reconnaissant que le travail que nous soutenons s'étend sur les maisons de nombreuses Premières nations, de Métis et d'Inuits sur l'île de la Tortue et que le savoir autochtone et le respect de tous les traités doivent être intégrés de manière significative dans le cadre d'une action significative sur la crise climatique. Nous reconnaissons que les peuples autochtones sont les propriétaires traditionnels et les gardiens de cette terre et que, depuis des décennies, ils constituent la première ligne de défense contre le dérèglement climatique. Par exemple, la résistance autochtone a permis d'arrêter au moins 1,8 milliard de tonnes métriques de pollution par les gaz à effet de serre sur l'île de la Tortue.

## **Our requests of our parliamentarians**

- 1. **Accelerate** the reduction of greenhouse gases in Ontario in order to reduce the harmful health effects of climate change which include increased respiratory and cardiovascular disease, injuries and premature deaths from extreme weather events, and the spread of Lyme and other infectious diseases.
- In light of recent reports by the RBC Climate Action Institute, Dunsky Energy
  + Climate Advisors, and the Sustainability Solutions Group, **Pause** the
  expansion of methane-fired electricity generation and evaluate the role of
  renewable energy and storage, conservation, distributed energy resources,
  and municipal net-zero plans in meeting Ontario's electricity needs.

## Nos demandes à nos parlementaires

- 1. **Accélérer** la réduction des gaz à effet de serre en Ontario afin de réduire les effets nocifs du changement climatique sur la santé, notamment l'augmentation des maladies respiratoires et cardiovasculaires, les blessures et les décès prématurés dus à des phénomènes météorologiques extrêmes, ainsi que la propagation de la maladie de Lyme et d'autres maladies infectieuses.
- 2. À la lumière des rapports récents du RBC Climate Action Institute, de Dunsky Energy + Climate Advisors et du Sustainability Solutions Group, **interrompre** l'expansion de la production d'électricité à partir de méthane et évaluer le rôle des énergies renouvelables et du stockage, de la conservation, des ressources énergétiques distribuées et des plans municipaux net-zéro pour répondre aux besoins en électricité de l'Ontario.

#### **Clarifications:**

**Methane-fired electricity generation:** Is also known as natural gas electricity plants or fossil gas-powered electricity power plants.

**Distributed energy resources:** refer to locally-owned facilities for electricity generation, control and storage.

#### Laser Talk: The Health Impacts of Methane-Fired Electricity Plants

**Takeaway:** Methane-fired electricity generation is harmful to public health through extraction and generated emissions contributing to both planetary heating and air pollution with their respective consequent adverse health impacts

Hydraulic fracturing — the process used to extract much of the gas Ontario uses — poses significant health implications to communities close to extraction facilities. In their Fractures in the Bridge report, the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE) identifies that studies on populations living near fracking facilities have identified over 30 adverse health outcomes. These include: adverse birth outcomes, birth defects, cancer, cardiovascular diseases, dermal effects, gastrointestinal symptoms, neurological effects, psychological impacts, and respiratory illnesses.

A recent study by C40 Cities modeled the air quality impacts of burning methane gas in cities. According to their modeling for Toronto in 2019, methane-fired electricity generation was responsible for 286 new childhood asthma cases, 9696 days of sick leave in workers and 215 premature deaths accounting for 3419 years of life lost.

The health implications of climate change are well established and include: heat stress and fatalities, food and housing insecurity, mental health impacts, proliferation of infectious diseases, as well as illness, injury and death due to natural hazards. Although once considered a less carbon intensive fuel, gas contributes significantly to climate change and its associated health consequences through fugitive emissions (i.e. methane leaks). Recent studies — including one by The Atmospheric Fund focused on Ontario — indicate that these invisible methane emissions mean that using gas for electricity is nearly as carbon intensive as coal when the full life cycle is considered.

Methane-fired electricity also generates lethal air pollution. According to the Government of Canada, in 2016 air pollution was responsible for the premature death of 6600 Ontarians with a monetary impact of over \$49 billion to the Province of Ontario. Air pollution causes disease of multiple human systems including asthma and other lung diseases, heart diseases, dementia, diabetes, harms to pregnant women include premature and low birth weight babies, multiple forms of cancer, and others.

#### Laser Talk: Ontario Should Pause Expansion of Methane-Fired Electricity Plants

**Takeaway:** Multiple recent reports indicate that Ontario does not need new methane-fired electricity plants.

A report commissioned by Ontario's Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) has noted, that Ontario can cost-effectively avoid the need for new methane-fired generating capacity by investing in: a) renewable energy; b) load controls that shift electricity demand from peak to off-peak periods; and c) energy storage.

Moreover, according to a new report from the Royal Bank of Canada's Climate Action Institute, Ontario can avoid the need for new gas plants and save at least \$500 million by taking action to conserve energy, and by adopting readily available technologies such as smart thermostats, electric panels and AI-enabled HVAC systems that can substantially improve grid efficiency and sustainability.

As well, Hydro Quebec has a huge surplus of hydro-electric generation capacity available for export to Ontario during the summer months.

Finally, a recent report by Sustainability Solutions Group highlights the imperative to develop integrated localised energy systems planning jointly between municipalities, utilities and the IESO.

#### Laser Talk: Carbon Capture and Sequestration is Risky Business

**Takeaway:** Building new fossil fuel infrastructure on the premise that Carbon Capture and Sequestration (CCS) will be able to sink emissions would be disastrous for the climate, energy costs and our financial system.

On September 7, 2023, the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) published a report titled : Why the Cost of Carbon Capture (CCS) and Storage Remains Persistently High. The authors concluded that the costs of CCS for oil and gas are high and unlikely to fall significantly. This is because the technology is too complex, it requires too much customization with each application, and it is unlikely that it will capture the benefits of mass manufacturing in the way technologies such as solar PV have. This makes CCS an inefficient and risky investment for public funds. Government should instead be supporting the transition to affordable, accessible renewable energy.

#### Laser Talk: Fossil Fuel Industry Funded Climate Disinformation for Decades

**Takeaway:** The climate crisis is a fossil fuels crisis. The business model of fossil fuels companies is based on lies and deception and thus is dangerously flawed. Governments are now beginning to sue for the damages done.

Even to this day, there are individuals who deny or downplay the link between the burning of fossil fuels and the impacts that pollution has on our climate and health. How did this happen?

Key players in the fossil fuel industry knew decades ago that burning coal, oil, and methane gas to warm our homes, power our cars, and generate electricity was warming the planet. Instead of acting on the knowledge, they began financing a massive disinformation campaign. Now, as a consequence, youth are having to fight for their inalienable right to have a safe and liveable future.

Happily, governments are now beginning to sue Big Oil including Puerto Rico, Delaware, Hoboken, New Jersey and the fifth largest economy in the world, California, for their deceptions. In Canada, Sue Big Oil in British Columbia is coordinating efforts to sue big oil too.

#### Suggested readings:

- Climate Cover-Up (2009) By James Hoggan and Richard Littlemore
- Merchants of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Climate Change (2011) by Naomi Oreskes
- Oil's Deep State: How the petroleum industry undermines democracy and stops action on global warming in Alberta, and in Ottawa (2017) Dr. Kevin Taft
- The New Climate War: The Fight to Take Back Our Planet (2021) By Michael E. Mann
- The Petroleum Papers: Inside the Far-Right Conspiracy to Cover Up Climate Change (2022) By Geoff Dembecki

#### Laser Talk : The Federal Clean Electricity Regulations (CER)

**Takeaway:** The Federal Clean Electricity Regulations (CER) aim to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions starting in 2035; however, we are concerned that the CER timeline is too long.

On August 19, 2023, the federal government published draft Clean Electricity Regulations (CER). The draft CER would establish performance standards to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from fossil fuel generated electricity starting in 2035. We need clean electricity to support expanded electrification of transportation, buildings and industry, helping Canada become a net-zero GHG emissions economy by 2050.

The draft CER would apply to fossil fuel electricity generating units with a capacity of 25 megawatts (MW) or greater. It would set a GHG emissions performance standard of 30 tCO2e/GWh.

The draft CER performance standard would apply starting:

- on January 1, 2035 for units that were commissioned, or increased their generation capacity by 10%, on or after January 1, 2025,
- January 1, 2035 or later for units converted from combustion of coal on or after January 1, 2025,
- for any other unit, the latter of January 1, 2035 or 20 years after its commissioning.

An exemption from the draft CER would allow the use of fossil fuel-fired units in emergency circumstances. The use of unabated fossil fuels (except coal), will also be allowed on a limited basis, such as for meeting additional generation requirements during periods of peak power demand.

#### Our concerns:

- The draft CER emission performance standard would come into effect only in 2035. This is too late. Interim targets are needed that are increasingly stringent to ensure the electricity sector does move to net-zero.
- The draft allows fossil gas plants with carbon capture to operate past 2035. There are as yet no commercial gas plants with carbon capture operating anywhere in the world. This sets us up for expensive failures.
- The application of the draft CER could be delayed for newer generating facilities commissioned before January 1, 2025. This will wrongly incentivize the construction of fossil gas generation facilities before 2025 as is happening in Ontario.

### Laser Talk: Canada's Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act Cuts GHGs

**Takeaway:** Canada is showing the world how a country can cut greenhouse gas emissions and protect the poor and middle class as we transition off of fossil fuels and to a fair and sustainable world for all.

In June 2018, the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act (GGPPA) achieved Royal Assent and became law of the land in Canada. The GGPPA implements a form of Climate Income policy with a gradually rising price on carbon pollution which by design is meant to gradually decrease greenhouse gas pollution so as not to shock the economy.

In April 2023, Canada released its 2023 National Inventory Report. Canada's National Inventory Report lags two years behind the actual year. Thus, for the first time, we could determine the impacts of the GGPPA in the absence of COVID lockdown. In 2021, Canada produced 670 million tonnes of carbon dioxide and its equivalents in methane, nitrous oxide, and synthetic gases as pandemic restrictions began to ease – 53 million tonnes less in emissions in 2021 than it did in 2019 — the year before the pandemic hit.

The government report's conclusions are in line with a similar report from the independent Canadian Climate Institute released in February 2023.

Carbon pricing is the cornerstone policy of Canada's climate plan and in 2018 was predicted to account for more than half of reductions of greenhouse gases (see image on left).

We know from plenty of other studies that most Canadians come out ahead – especially the lower and middle income Canadians who are currently being challenged by the inflation crisis like many around the world.



Of note, Austria enacted a similar carbon pricing policy called Klimabonus earlier this year and the German government has proposed a Klimageld and is committed to returning carbon pricing revenues too.

## Laser Talk: Recent News about Climate Crisis

**Takeaway:** The vital signs of the climate are very alarming but we still have time. We need to be brave and unite across party lines.

- The Earth and Canada just passed through the hottest three months on record ever.
- Canada is experiencing the most severe wildfire season on record exposing many
- Summer Arctic sea ice extent is shrinking by 12.6% per decade due to warmer temperatures.
- The Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC) a crucial system of ocean currents that transport warm waters northward in the North Atlantic — could collapse as early as 2025 if greenhouse gas emissions persist, according to a recent study published in Nature Communications on July 25. The impacts this will have on weather systems and thus food systems are unimaginable.
- On September 18, 2023 Antarctic sea ice coverage was at a mind blowing record low.
- Findings in the IPCC AR 6 Synthesis report (April 2023) were clear that there is sufficient global capital to rapidly reduce GHG pollution if barriers are reduced.
- The good news is that within a decade or two of reaching net-zero emissions the Earth climate systems will begin to stabilise.

#### Laser Talk: Recent Climate Change Related Reports and Activities in Ontario

**Takeaway:** We celebrate the Ontario and Quebec electricity agreement but we need our government to be a lot more proactive on the climate crisis for the sake of both the environment and the economy.

There have been both good and concerning reports with regards to the climate crisis and Ontario recently.

In good news, in late August the Governments of Ontario and Quebec announced a New Electricity Trade Agreement.

Two pieces of concerning news was the grim report on Ontario's preparedness for the climate crisis and the 2018 official Ontario Government letters mandating ministers to limit climate law impact on businesses.

The evidence is overwhelming that superior business opportunities exist in regions where clean electricity is a priority.

## Lobbying 101

| Points Covered   | Your notes |
|--|------------|
| <b>One Rule:</b><br>Respect, admiration, and gratitude for service   |            |
| <b>Do your research:</b><br>Get to know the politician first.<br>A big goal is to find something they have done that<br>you can appreciate them for.<br>Search their websites, social media, and<br>government websites including the hansard.<br>Be sure to also include contact information and the<br>name of the politicians' staffers.<br>Share it with your team.          |            |
| Script for securing an appointment:<br>Appreciation of MPP and staff's service to your<br>community, Ontario and Canada.<br>Identify who you are, including what organization<br>you are representing.<br>Identify yourself as a constituent.<br>State briefly what you like to discuss with the<br>parliamentarian. The more focused you are the<br>better.                     |            |
| Securing the Appointment<br>Phone and then email.<br>If need be, leave a voicemail and follow it up with<br>an email.<br>If you are a constituent, identify yourself as one.<br>Be sure to mention you are specifically the<br>organization you are with.<br>Lastly, give them a deadline to respond and if they<br>don't respond by that deadline call and then email<br>again. |            |
| Roles in Your Meeting<br>These are suggestions, be flexible, be ready to<br>assume multiple roles and encourage everyone to<br>participate in the discussion .<br>Lobby Lead, Appreciator, Time Monitor, Notetaker<br>Discussion, Asker, Deliverer, Follow-up,<br>Photographer<br>Observer   |            |

| Motivational Interviewing<br>Stay highly focused on the lobbying asks and use<br>motivational interviewing to uncover how we can move<br>forward together.<br><i>A person-centered interviewing style for eliciting</i><br><i>behavior change by helping people to explore, find</i><br><i>common ground and overcome obstacles and move</i><br><i>forward together.</i><br>BASIC STEPS<br>Get permissions to start a topic.<br>Ask how, who, what, when and where questions. Avoid<br>why questions.<br>Get the other person talking. The politicians should be<br>doing most of the talking. |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Meeting Outline</b><br>Beginning: thanks, how much time, intros, appreciation, state our purpose and ask.<br>Middle: exchange thoughts, Motivational Interviewing, questions, listening for values, and moving MP forward.<br>End: clarify supporting ask(s), plans for follow-up, photo, and thank them for time.<br>If the politician seems hesitant you can tell them we operate under <b>Chatham House Rules</b> and we will not share publicly anything they say to us unless they instruct us otherwise.  |  |
| <b>Post-meeting:</b><br>In a group determine the 5-7 most important takeaways from the meetings. What did the politicians say that jumped out out at you? Let everyone reflect.  |  |
| Do's while lobbying  |  |
| Don'ts while lobbying  |  |
| Question you have about lobbying<br>your MPPs  |  |

## Getting ready to lobby

Important information to capture all in one place

- 1. Contact information of the MPP include the staffer's name, email and phone number
- 2. Names, roles and contact information of all lobbyists. See table below
- 3. Motivational Interviewing Questions
- 4. General Agenda of your meeting Introductions, Appreciation, How much time do you have?, The Ask, Possible motivational interviewing questions. Note this part might go off script depending on the politician and where she/he/they lead the conversation. Wrap up. Photo. Follow-up
- 5. Post-meeting reflections: the 5-7 most important takeaways from the meetings. What did the politicians say that jumped out at you? Let everyone reflect.

| ROLE                            | PERSON (S) | Contact information |
|---------------------------------|------------|---------------------|
| Lead                            |            |                     |
| Time keeper                     |            |                     |
| Photographer                    |            |                     |
| The askers                      |            |                     |
| The appreciator                 |            |                     |
| Notetaker                       |            |                     |
| Gas Fired Electricity<br>Expert |            |                     |
| Health expert (s)               |            |                     |
| Other expertise                 |            |                     |
|                                 |            |                     |
|                                 |            |                     |