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December 14, 2016

Hon. Glenn Thibeault
Minister of Energy
4th Floor, Hearst Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto ON M7A 2E1

Re: 2017 Long Term Energy Plan Consultation

Minister Thibeault,

Thank you for your letter of November 15, 2016. We appreciate your comments and notification of the opportunity to participate in the Long Term Energy Plan (LTEP) consultations. It is in this regard that we write to you today, on behalf of Sarnia-Lambton businesses.

The Chamber appreciates this opportunity to comment on the 2017 Long Term Energy Plan, because we feel that our community will play a central role in Ontario's energy future.

As an energy centre for more than 100 years, Sarnia-Lambton has been a leader in energy exploration, processing, conversion, handling, storage and management. We have extensive energy related infrastructure, industrial facilities, Lambton College, Western University Research Park all complemented by a wealth of experience and knowledge. Our underground storage facilities are among the largest in North America, ensuring reliability of Ontario's energy supply. Sarnia-Lambton also offers abundant sources of electricity generation, including high efficiency gas, solar, wind and energy-from-waste. We are in an ideal position to manufacture solar panels, micro-grid testing, energy storage, bio-fuels research and development and bio-gas production and injection into natural gas. This is why companies like Ubiquity Solar and Comet Biorefining are investing in our community. It is why Bioindustrial Innovation Canada, a world-class incubator for bio-based start-ups, is based in Sarnia.

In addition to our energy expertise and facilities, we would also be a willing host of electric vehicle charging stations and a test site for electric public transit. Our members are hopeful that the Minister will recognize and utilize the opportunities and strengths that Sarnia-Lambton has to offer Ontario and Canada in the 2017 LTEP.

Over the past few years Ontario has successfully invested to improve electricity system reliability, system capacity, power quality, and reduce GHG emissions. These improvements are pre-requisites for

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a sustainable, prosperous and wealth generating energy future. However, our members are concerned about the present state of electricity pricing.

The cost of electricity is the number one concern we hear about time and time again and changes in the energy sector are happening faster than many businesses are able to adapt. They are struggling to keep up. They see little incentive to invest further in energy conservation when there is no apparent cost savings on their utility bills. Moreover, the common perception is that Ontario's electricity costs are the highest in North America, yet, there are independent studies that say otherwise. No matter what studies show, however, the lack of transparency within the sector, the monthly variability of the Global Adjustment and the rising costs despite conservation efforts will deter economic development due to the belief that Ontario is not an affordable place to do business. We welcome the opportunity to work with the government to overcome these perceptions and to help resolve these issues.

The Sarnia Lambton Chamber recommends that the 2017 LTEP add the guiding principles of affordability and transparency, which we believe are as important as conservation, cost-effectiveness, reliability, clean energy and community engagement. We urge the Minister to commission an independent economic analysis of the Plan before it is implemented and to include in the Plan a 20-year forecast of the price (not just demand) of electricity, fuels and natural gas. We also urge the Minister to work with the Ontario Energy Board to increase transparency and stabilize prices. This is important for businesses to better manage their monthly cash flow and plan for their future. It is our belief that these moves would bring certainty to rate payers and improve Ontario's reputation as an affordable place to do business. It will also allow the Province to move forward on the opportunities that await the energy sector.

We would look forward to an opportunity to further discuss the roles that Sarnia-Lambton could play in helping the province resolve the pricing issue and to implement the LTEP in a roundtable with you and our members. We will contact your office in the coming months to arrange for this roundtable discussion.

Please contact Monica Shepley, Manager of Advocacy and Policy Development, at 519-336-2400 or by email at mshepley@sarnialambtonchamber.com to discuss further.

On behalf of the Sarnia Lambton Chamber of Commerce, thank you for your attention on these important matters.

Yours Truly,



Mark Lumley
Chair, Board of Directors



Shirley de Silva
President and CEO