



**Ontario Federation of Agriculture**

**Ontario AgriCentre**

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April 4, 2017

Hon. Glenn Thibeault  
Minister of Energy  
Hearst Block 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
900 Bay St, Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 2E1

**Re:** Ontario Regulatory Registry Proposal 17-ENE002 Proposed Amendments; O. Reg. 429/04 Expansion of the Industrial Conservation Initiative (ICI) made under the Electricity Act, 1998

Minister Thibeault,

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture represents the interests of over 36,000 farm families across Ontario. We reflect and advocate for the public policy needs of our farm families and their communities.

Energy is one of our largest farm inputs, but also represents a significant cost to rural residents, and local businesses. OFA is pleased that recent Ontario government announcements will ensure General Service Energy, Remote, and Rural customers and small businesses will see some short-term relief.

Rising electricity costs have dampened growth in Ontario's agriculture and agri-food sectors. The proposed ICI amendments for manufacturing will make more food processors and rural manufacturers eligible for ICI by lowering the energy threshold to 500 kW demand. However, since only manufacturing was identified as eligible for the new threshold, primary farming can not take advantage of the new threshold reduction. These same General Service Demand farm customers, are also excluded from recently announced distribution cost reductions meant to ensure greater fairness for rural customers. OFA feels **all** farming should benefit from the desired greater fairness, including these farms that comprise over half of Hydro One General Service Demand portfolio.

The recent Ontario initiatives will provide promising short-term relief for many of our members and rural neighbours. Given the government's rationale for the relief we are disappointed it is not available to General Service Demand farm customers, also deserving of reduced delivery charges and deserving of eligibility in the expanded ICI program. While many customers will capitalize on the near-term relief from high electricity bills, OFA will continue to work towards a secure energy future for **all** farming and rural businesses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Currie', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Keith Currie  
President

CC OFA Board of Directors

[Comments submitted through Regulatory Posting via email](#)