



Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Ontario AgriCentre

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April 4, 2017

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

Re: Ontario Regulatory Registry Proposal 17-ENE001 Amendments to O. Reg. 314/15 Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP) made under the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998, that support the implementation of Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan

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 the largest farm input costs, and with limited fuel choices, it represents a significant cost to rural residents and local businesses. The rising cost of electricity has dampened Ontario agriculture and agri-food sector growth. The recent Ontario government's announcement to reduce electricity costs and equalize distribution costs provides promising short-term relief for our members and our rural neighbours.

Energy poverty is already a familiar and growing consequence of high utility costs. OFA supports the expansion of OESP payment scales and income brackets. An unacceptable number of rural residents and customers on fixed incomes, cannot afford to secure this basic amenity.

We will continue to work with government to identify and develop a sound and sustainable energy system for the future. Rural customers will capitalize on the near-term relief from high electricity bills while we work towards a secure energy future for our farming and rural businesses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Currie', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Keith Currie
President

CC OFA Board of Directors
[Comments submitted through Regulatory Posting via email](#)