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March 28, 1996

Ms. Grace Patterson
Chair, Environmental Assessment Board
P.O. Box 2382, 12th Floor 2300 Yonge St.
Toronto, Ontario M4P 1E4

Dear Ms. Patterson:

Over the past year, the Ministry of Environment and Energy, in consultation with the Ministry of the Attorney General, has been reviewing the intervenor funding pilot project, given that the statute, the *Intervenor Funding Project Act*, sunsets on March 31, 1996.

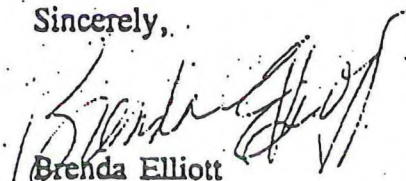
One of my foremost considerations throughout this review has been the continuation of a system which will ensure effective public participation in government decision-making. We have completed our review, and after taking into consideration the views of a range of stakeholders, the government has decided that the Act will sunset, as originally intended. This direction is consistent with our commitment to make hearings more efficient and to reduce non-essential administrative processes.

The government is currently assessing other mechanisms which will provide for early public involvement as part of our waste approvals reform initiative. We are in the process of developing guidelines for enhanced public participation in Ministry decision-making. As well, we will be developing options for streamlining administrative procedures for the Ontario Energy Board, as a follow up to the work of the Advisory Committee on Competition in Ontario's Electricity System.

Participants in hearings before the Environmental Assessment Board, the Joint Board, and the Ontario Energy Board will continue to be eligible for cost awards at the end of the hearings, as was done prior to the Act, to compensate them for their participation. In addition, we will continue to encourage proponents to provide participant funding on a voluntary basis. With these measures, we are confident that there will be minimal impact on public accessibility, and that hearings will result in balanced and informed decisions.

In closing, I want to express my appreciation to you and to the Board staff for your excellent co-operation and for your timely advice on the EAB's experience with intervenor funding.

Sincerely,


Brenda Elliott
Minister