

Energy Vision Meeting with Minister Donna Cansfield
Thursday November 3, 2005, 12:00

Introductory remarks – Theresa McClenaghan

- Thanks to Minister Cansfield for meeting with us
- Energy Vision is a coalition of over 3 dozen energy, environmental, health, peace, women's and citizen's organizations from across Ontario working together toward a common energy vision for Ontario's future
- Our organizations are extremely knowledgeable and passionate about the challenges we as a society face for Ontario's energy future, and we have worked toward concrete, sophisticated, practical solutions to many of those challenges
- We are happy to have this meeting with the Minister today and hope there will be many more opportunities to work closely with you as this government structures a path forward that will have major ramifications for the future citizens of this province
- We are very much looking forward to the introduction of the Energy Conservation Leadership Act later today, and some of us will be attending that event, while others are attending the Ontario Power Authority's consultation also being held today regarding the supply directives advice it is preparing for you
- We are also looking forward to seeing Peter Love's November 7th report from the Conservation Bureau as to whether Ontario is meeting its 5% target, what the opportunities and barriers for conservation are, and what the conservation business plan looks like for 2006. Some of us will be meeting with him and his staff immediately after it is released for a briefing.

There are four areas that we would as a group like to discuss with the Minister today:

1. Conservation and Efficiency

We are all agreed that first and foremost, Ontario must make huge efforts and changes to maximize the potential for conservation and efficiency in the province. For example, changes to Ontario's Building Code and other standards would provide enormous energy savings. Conservation must be made affordable to all Ontarians. Fiscal policies that give conservation as much import as new generation are absolutely mandatory. We're here to support you as Minister on Ontario's conservation and efficiency path. However, we would ask that you give us and the rest of Ontario's citizens and businesses the time and support to make conservation and efficiency really work, before making any decisions that future generations will regret.

2. Renewable Energy

Renewable energy of course is the only sustainable energy future. You have at your disposal from among our organizations the sophisticated expertise, enthusiasm, ideas, time, support and resources to make sure that Ontario makes the very most of renewable energy that can possibly be obtained. This will require real dedication and commitment by the

Ontario government to supporting the continued rapid development of renewable energy through pricing, policies, contractual support, access to the grid, and planning for a distributed energy system as opposed to a system focused on centralized mega-generation projects. The enthusiasm across the province for renewable energy is palpable. By championing this sector to success, your government will be not only providing for a liveable, healthy, affordable energy future, but meeting today's enormous public demand and expectation for renewable power.

3. Phase-Out of the Coal and Nuclear Plants

Your government has generated enormous good-will and support on the part of the public and the environmental community with the phase-out of the coal fired power plants. However this goodwill is being squandered with the ongoing, mistaken commitment to nuclear power generation. Why continued investment in nuclear power is a mistake includes the mammoth costs of nuclear power, the mis-accounting that does not include waste disposal costs and health costs in the alleged cost of nuclear power among many other omissions, the on-going legacy of generating highly hazardous radioactive waste that the Nuclear Waste Management Organization tells us will be hazardous for a million years, the risks of serious accident with the unthinkable implications for Ontario's heartland in such an event, and the on-going health impacts of routine radioactive emissions from the nuclear power plants in Ontario. Your government must avoid any additional commitment to nuclear power generation in Ontario while giving time and effort to making conservation, efficiency and renewable power generation actually work.

4. The Public Debate on the future of nuclear power in Ontario

The Ontario public was promised an open and public debate on the future of nuclear power in Ontario. We haven't had that debate yet, but your government has continued to make serious commitments to nuclear power through the refurbishment decisions for some of the existing nuclear generation units. The Ontario public wants this debate, and wants it to be open, transparent, accessible and thorough. We are looking for your commitment to such a debate and look forward to your explanation as to how and when the public will be able to participate in the discussion about the on-going role of nuclear power for Ontario. It is your prerogative under the new Electricity Act for Ontario to issue supply directives as to the type and proportion of any particular type of generation that the Ontario Power Authority should secure over a specific time frame. We would like your assurance that you will not issue such a supply directive covering nuclear power will be issued before the public has a chance to debate this question.

Elizabeth May and Chris Winter will elaborate on the conservation and efficiency points; Melinda Zytaruk and Dave Martin will discuss renewable energy; Dave Martin and Dorothy Goldin-Rosenberg will speak to the question of additional commitment to nuclear power and I and Gracia Janes will say a little bit more about the public process question with respect to future supply decisions.