



Canadian Environmental Law Association  
L'Association canadienne du droit de l'environnement

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PRESS RELEASE

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ONTARIO HYDRO SURGES AHEAD ON POWER PLAY WITH  
TRANSMISSION LINE HEARINGS

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The Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA) today asked the Consolidated Hearings Board to delay issuing an Order establishing January 26, 1982 as the starting date of a hearing into the application of Ontario Hydro to construct a massive transmission corridor through southwest Ontario.

The request was made on behalf of the Ontario Coalition to Preserve Foodlands, an umbrella group composed of individuals and various citizens' groups, including the Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment and Preservation of Agriculture Lands Society.

The Coalition concerns include:

1. The loss of agricultural land if the expansion program is approved;
2. Ontario Hydro's hidden agenda of exporting nuclear power to the U.S.;
3. Ontario Hydro's forecasting for approval of facilities 10 years in the future.

If the southwestern Ontario hearing on the Hydro transmission line does begin on January 26, 1982 as scheduled, this will simply not allow for proper preparation time for any concerned parties. Given the broad scope of the hearing, the complexity of the issues to be raised and the fact that the release of the Ministry of Environment review on the assessment occurred in the middle of the Christmas holiday season, it will be next to impossible for groups who are parties at the hearing to properly prepare their own representations, witnesses and submissions in this matter as well as complete an analysis of the Ministry of the Environment review on the subject.

In a letter to Mr. B.E. Smith, Chairman of the Joint Board Hearing, CELA further notified that the Ontario Coalition to Preserve Foodlands would

be making representations concerning the 2-stage process that Ontario Hydro has undertaken in this assessment. The Ontario Coalition to Preserve Foodlands will also request public funding so that they may more fully participate throughout the hearings and bring the witnesses that may be required to present their case. Without adequate funding, the notion of meaningful public participation is undermined.

There are numerous problems with the hearing process as it now stands. The timing of the hearing may conflict with the timing of the hearing on the southeastern Ontario transmission line which is beginning on January 5, 1982.

In a letter to The Honourable Keith Norton, Minister of the Environment, CELA requested a period of at least 90 days for public review. A request for an extension beyond 30 day's notice is provided for under the Environmental Assessment Act.

It is the opinion of the Canadian Environmental Law Association that the hearing process could be unfair unless these time restrictions are removed and funding for intervenors provided.