



Lou Rinaldi, M.P.P.
Northumberland-Quinte West

August 11, 2016

Good Morning Everyone,

Thank you for the kind invitation to attend Northumberland Manufacturer's Association, Energy Forum. It is with deep regret that I cannot attend this morning and bring greetings on behalf of the province of Ontario. It is my hope that you have a productive, collaborative forum. I have had the opportunity to meet recently with one of the guest speakers, Peter Ayres and we were able to sit down and discuss some of the concerns in the manufacturing industry.

There have been many positive changes in energy, including the modernization of an electricity system that needed to be fixed, to ensure Ontarians have the power they need, when they need it. We took a dirty system and made it clean, by completely eliminating dirty coal-fired generation – meaning Ontario will have a cleaner future. And we took action to reduce overall electricity system costs and ensure electricity bills remain affordable for families and businesses.

Increases in rates are directly tied to the massive investments that we made to modernize a system that the previous government left in a state of utter disrepair. And it is the Ontario Energy Board, the province's independent energy regulator, with a mandate to protect the interests of Ontario ratepayers that reviews all rate applications and makes the final determination on rate changes.

Ontario's residential electricity rates are and will remain competitive with similar jurisdictions in North America. When comparing the cost per kWh, Ontario's rates compare favourably to similarly sized American cities. Ontario's industrial rates also compare favourably with other jurisdictions: Industrial rates in Northern Ontario are among the lowest in Canada and are lower than 49 American states. Industrial rates in Southern Ontario are lower than in Michigan, Wisconsin, New Jersey, California and below the American average. And while other jurisdictions are still burning dirty coal for two-thirds of their power, we have achieved competitive rates while undertaking the largest climate change initiative in North America.

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That being said, we understand that the investments we have made to improve the system are putting pressure on businesses. There are already a number of programs available for businesses to help them save on their energy costs, but we know that more needs to be done. Companies taking part in the saveONenergy for Business Program, including the saveONenergy Retrofit initiative, have seen real results in terms of electricity savings.

Conservation is still the most effective way to lower energy costs. Energy conservation is proven to be successful and provides savings for consumers on every bill. Simply put, saving energy means saving money. Energy you don't use is energy you don't pay for. Conservation is the first resource considered, as it is the cleanest and most cost-effective energy resource, and it offers multiple benefits to Ontarians.

The Ministry of Energy is beginning to develop the next Long-Term Energy Plan (LTEP) for the province. Planning for province-wide consultations is currently underway and I encourage your membership to participate in the LTEP consultation process to ensure that your views are considered.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read "Lou Rinaldi".

Lou Rinaldi, M.P.P.
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