



National Farmers Union

July 5, 2010

Honourable Brad Duguid  
Minister of Energy and Infrastructure  
900 Bay St., 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Hearst Block  
Toronto, ON  
M7A 2E1  
[bduguid.mpp@liberal.ola.org](mailto:bduguid.mpp@liberal.ola.org)

5420 Hwy #6 North  
R.R. #5  
Suite 229  
Guelph, Ontario  
N1H 6J2

[office@nfuontario.ca](mailto:office@nfuontario.ca)

1 888 832-9638

Dear Honourable Duguid:

The National Farmers Union supports the production of energy from renewable, sustainable sources including solar, wind and low-impact hydro to help conserve the remaining fossil fuel supply and to minimize the environmental impacts of energy extraction and production. However, we also believe farmers, rural residents, and the broader public must control the production of renewable energy and should be the main beneficiaries of any and all realized profits and benefits.

Ontario's electricity system was developed for the benefit of the people of Ontario, through public ownerships of the production and distribution of electrical power. In addition, electricity was sold to consumers at cost. In order to facilitate the development of renewable energy, the Green Energy Act increases the cost of electricity to consumers by offering contracts for renewable power that are far above the amount the people of Ontario now pay for electricity.

NFU members, who are landowners and farmers, are concerned that this continuing trend of opening the doors to large, private, renewable energy companies brings with it a risk that most of the financial benefits of renewable energy production will leave the province, rather than stay in our communities to the benefit of the people of Ontario, both rural and urban.

Given our position outlined above, the NFU Ontario has several concerns about the Ontario Green Energy Act:

- The focus of the Green Energy Act must shift away from the production of 'green' energy, to energy conservation. 'Green' energy production simply continues a treadmill where ways to produce more and more energy must constantly be found. A focus on energy conservation would decrease energy demand.
- The MEI must change the goals and process of the community consultation requirement under the Green Energy Act. The mandated public consultation process of the GEA provides little opportunity for farmers and rural residents to jointly discuss the pros and

cons of a proposed project or to jointly address how they will be impacted by the project. The consultation process must address community concerns, including health concerns, and provide mechanisms to address those concerns. There must be mechanisms to stop projects from proceeding if a community feels its concerns have not been adequately addressed.

- The MEI should change who approves projects under the Green Energy Act. Under the mandated process control over the approval of renewable energy projects, both small and large, is held by the province. Instead, control over planning, permitting and zoning should be held by farmers, rural communities and rural municipalities. Communities where renewable energy developments are being erected would then have the opportunity to negotiate changes to address their concerns. In the past, rural municipalities were able to negotiate amenity agreements with industrial wind developers, which acknowledged the impact of large-scale wind farms on the broader community.

The National Farmers Union would like to meet with you to further discuss our concerns and recommendations for changes to the Ontario Green Energy Act. We would like to work with you to create a system of renewable, sustainable energy production that benefits the farmers, rural communities and the broader public.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ann Slater".

Ann Slater,  
NFU Board Member