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November 20, 2009



Citizens Environment Alliance



Friends of the Earth / Les Ami(e)s de la Terre



FORUM FOR LEADERSHIP ON WATER



CFOW ONTARIO COUNCIL



Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations



SIERRA CLUB ONTARIO



POLIS Project on Ecological Governance



Alliance for Water Efficiency



CANADIAN INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY

L'INSTITUT CANADIEN DU DROIT ET DE LA POLITIQUE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT

The Hon. Gerry Phillips, Minister of Energy and Infrastructure

Queen's Park
Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure
Hearst Block, 4th Floor, 900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 2E1

Re: Water efficiency in MEI policies

Dear Hon. Gerry Phillips,

We are writing to encourage you and your ministry to support the Ministry of Environment's provincial water conservation and efficiency strategy, as part of *Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Resources for Future Generations*. We commend your efforts to include water in the Green Energy Act, a strong water conservation strategy would build on that success to further secure Ontario's leadership role in the international green economy.

Our coalition of 16 groups of water professionals, university think-tanks, and environmental and citizen-based groups support the 25 actions outlined in *H₂Ontario: A Blueprint for a Comprehensive Water Conservation and Efficiency Strategy*. We encourage the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure to consider the many opportunities for water conservation and efficiency to conserve energy, save Ontarians money, contribute to a more sustainable environment and create healthier communities.

The interconnectedness of water and energy mean that a significant amount of energy is required to extract, treat, heat and distribute water, as well as to collect and treat the resulting wastewater. A study by the POLIS Project, *Greenhouse Gas and Energy Co-benefits of Water Conservation*, demonstrates that the energy required for water pumping and treatment is a significant proportion of municipal energy use. For example, the City of Toronto, the Region of Peel and the City of Guelph identified water and wastewater management as accounting for 25-60% of their municipal energy use. Accordingly, a strong water conservation and efficiency strategy in the province will not only save water, but will also contribute significantly to the province's energy conservation, energy planning goals and greenhouse gas reduction strategies.

In terms of incorporating water efficiency into MEI policy, we urge you to consider the following key opportunities:

- Make water infrastructure grants issued by MEI contingent on water conservation plans and programs
- Acknowledge water conservation as the most economical form of new water infrastructure, and provide funding for water conservation initiatives accordingly
- Include water efficiency as an aspect of all energy efficiency projects where applicable
- Expand the ecoEnergy programme to include water audits and rebates
- Enact water efficiency standards under the new powers provided in the Green Energy Act, including a water efficiency labelling program

In addition, we encourage you and your Ministry to support other key opportunities in your colleagues' portfolios, such as:

- Update the Ontario Building Code to reflect best available technology and include a water efficiency expert in the Building Code review process
- Mandating conservation plans for water taking permit holders and municipalities
- Supporting R&D for conservation and innovative use of non-potable water sources (rather than requiring all water to be treated as if it is drinking water regardless of use)

We would like to request a meeting with you on behalf of our coalition in the next couple of weeks to discuss how the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure can make the water-energy connection and develop policies that contribute to Ontario's new water conservation and efficiency strategy. Please feel free to contact me at 416-960-2284 ext. 219 or by email at theresa@cela.ca to arrange a meeting. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

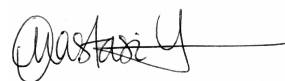


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Encl.: 2

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