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MEDIA RELEASE

ENVIRONMENTALISTS APPLAUD MCGUINITY COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

December 16, 2005

Toronto. The Canadian Environmental Law Association and the Pembina Institute today applauded Premier McGuinty's commitment to a full provincial Environmental Assessment of the integrated supply plan for Ontario's electricity system.

Responding to questions during Question Period yesterday, Premier McGuinty stated that the province will engage in a "full, open and public" consultation with Ontarians regarding the supply mix advice given to the province by the Ontario Power Authority last week, and that the specific proposal for Ontario's electricity system eventually to be developed by the Power Authority will be "the subject of an environmental assessment." The Premier stated that additional details on further consultations are to be provided by the Minister of Energy "in the new year."

"We are very pleased that the Premier has confirmed that the Ontario public will have a real say on the questions of Ontario's electricity future", stated Theresa McClenaghan, Counsel with the Canadian Environmental Law Association. "We are concerned that the Ontario Power Authority's advice was prepared with very little time or opportunity for the public to engage in this question of huge importance to our province's future economy, health and environment."

"We welcome the Premier's commitment that after consulting with Ontarians, the Integrated Supply Mix Plan for Ontario's future electricity supply will go to a full provincial Environmental Assessment", said Dr. Mark Winfield, Director of the Pembina Institute's Environmental Governance Program. "The specific plan must be tested in an open, transparent forum that allows for public participation, calling and cross examination of evidence, and an understanding of risks, costs and benefits of various options. Designating the plan for review under the Environmental Assessment Act, as the government of former Premier David Peterson did with Ontario Hydro's proposed demand supply plan in 1989, is the most effective and efficient means of achieving these goals."

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