

Ministry of Energy

Office of the Minister

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Ministère de l'Énergie

Bureau du ministre

4^e étage, édifice Hearst
900, rue Bay
Toronto ON M7A 2E1
Tél. : 416 327-6758
Téléc. : 416 327-6754



MC-2016-1909

Ms Francesca Dobbyn
Executive Director
United Way of Bruce Grey
380 9th Street East
Owen Sound ON N4K 1P1

Dear Ms Dobbyn:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me on September 16, 2016. I appreciated the opportunity to discuss the energy cost challenges in your community and the government's initiatives to help Ontarians manage their electricity bills.

Knowing that transforming to a clean and reliable electricity system would place pressure on consumers, particularly those on fixed or modest incomes, the government created programs that you are familiar with such as the Ontario Energy and Property Tax Credit (OEPTC), which provides low- to moderate-income individuals and families with relief on the sales tax they pay on energy and with their property taxes. Since July 2012, the OEPTC is paid monthly as part of the Ontario Trillium Benefit delivered through the income tax system. For the 2016 benefit year, qualifying individuals and families could receive a maximum benefit of \$1,008 per year, and qualifying seniors could receive a maximum benefit of up to \$1,148. Individuals can apply for this credit by completing the Ontario Benefits Application for the Ontario Trillium Benefit and the Ontario Senior Homeowners' Property Tax Grant, which is part of the personal income tax and benefit return.

In addition, the Ontario Electricity Support Program provides ongoing assistance directly on the bills of eligible low-income consumers, and the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program includes access to financial assistance, special rules and conservation programs to help qualifying low-income consumers in critical financial need.

The government continues to be committed to making everyday life easier for Ontarians. For example, at the start of 2016 we removed the Debt Retirement Charge from residential electricity bills, saving a typical residential ratepayer about \$70 per year.

I was pleased to be able to outline for you the further actions we are now taking to reduce electricity bills. On September 12, 2016, the Throne Speech announced the government's intent to introduce legislation that, if passed, would rebate an amount equal to the provincial portion of the Harmonized Sales Tax on the bills of about five million families, farms and small businesses as of January 1, 2017. This rebate would amount to annual savings of about \$130 for the average household.

Eligible rural ratepayers would receive additional relief, resulting in average savings of about \$540 per year. Relief for larger businesses would come through plans to expand the Industrial Conservation Initiative.

I trust that these proposed reforms will provide meaningful relief to the community you serve.

Thank you again for our meeting and please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,

Glenn Thibeault
Minister

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Mr. Nick Lovell
Chair
United Way of Bruce Grey
380 9th Street East
Owen Sound ON N4K 1P1

Dear Mr. Lovell:

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Mr. David Myette
Past Chair
United Way of Bruce Grey
380 9th Street East
Owen Sound ON N4K 1P1

Dear Mr. Myette:

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Glenn Thibeault
Minister