

Ministry of Energy

Office of the Minister

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Ms Teresa Sarkesian
President and Chief Executive Officer
Electricity Distributors Association (EDA)
1100–3700 Steeles Avenue West
Vaughan ON L4L 8K8

Dear Ms Sarkesian:

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Electricity Distributors Association (EDA), and its members, for your continued efforts in support of Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan (OFHP), and ensuring the plan's various price mitigation initiatives are implemented on-time for Ontario ratepayers. This plan recognizes that rising electricity prices are among the highest priorities for Ontarians, and takes the necessary steps to provide significant rate relief and ensure greater fairness.

In anticipation of these OFHP initiatives, the Ministry has introduced new invoicing requirements to support transparency and communication of the changes made under this plan. Many of these requirements affect EDA members directly; requiring on-bill messaging to describe the plan's initiatives, as well as the distribution of quarterly OFHP bill inserts to inform customers about the resultant bill impacts.

To offset these new invoicing requirements, the Ministry has taken steps to remove outdated informational messaging from invoices to free-up space for distributors and avoid potential confusion amongst consumers. This includes removal of the on-bill Debt Retirement Charge (DRC) informational messaging, as well as revocation of the Ontario Rebate for Electricity Consumers messaging requirements from invoices and envelopes under O. Reg. 364/16.

Looking beyond Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan, we believe there is an opportunity to revise the regulatory framework on bill presentment to improve the value of electricity invoices to all consumers in Ontario. In pursuit of this effort, the Ministry intends to launch a Redesign Action Plan (RAP) on simplifying bill presentment beginning this summer. One objective of this process will be to optimize key elements of the bill to help address customer confusion, with the aim of making the bill easier to understand and ensuring customers get the most out of their bills.

To kick-off this initiative, the Ministry plans to convene a working group in late July to seek feedback from Local Distribution Companies (LDCs), and other interested parties, on the current regulatory framework for billing and to identify areas for improvement. We welcome the participation of the EDA in this group and intend to reach out with further details, once finalized, next month.

As you may be aware, Hydro One is also moving forward with plans to introduce a redesigned electricity bill later this year. In order to facilitate this initiative, the Ministry has exempted Hydro One from current invoicing requirements under O. Reg. 275/04, as well as specified OFHP messaging requirements, as of July 1, 2017. This exemption will allow Hydro One to proceed with their planned bill redesign, unencumbered by regulation. As part of this pilot process, Hydro One has agreed to participate in the Ministry's RAP working group to share their learnings and customer feedback received.

Once again, let me thank you and your organization for your input and hard work over recent months as we developed and implemented Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan. This was an ambitious effort that will serve the needs of Ontario and its ratepayers now and into the future.

I look forward to continuing to work together, as we embark on improving the usefulness of electricity invoices for all ratepayers.

Sincerely,

Glenn Thibeault
Minister

c. Vinay Sharma, Chair, Board of Directors, Electricity Distributors Association