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May 29, 2017

Honourable Glenn Thibeault
Ministry of Energy
4th Floor, Hearst Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2E1

Dear Minister Thibeault:

As previously stated, I would like to thank you and Premier Wynne for your dedication and support for the First Nation Delivery Credit. The stories that we heard over the course of the engagement sessions with First Nations in the fall of 2016 were truly troubling. The announcement of the Ontario Fair Hydro Plan was a great relief to our citizens and we are waiting with great anticipation for the implementation.

As I understand, the Chiefs Committee on Energy has been working with Ministry of Energy staff on a strategy for implementation of the First Nation Delivery Credit, and that the targeted timeline for implementation is July 1, 2017. Due to the tight timelines, I understand that the immediate goal is to ensure that on-reserve First Nations citizens receive the credit as the top priority. I support the Chiefs Committee on Energy in this work, and believe that this is the appropriate approach.

Implementing this program quickly and efficiently will go a long way in demonstrating to our citizens that there is a willingness to improve relationships between the government and First Nations. Many citizens believe that this is too good to be true, so we need to work to provide a level of optimism in our communities, that change is possible.

I also understand that once the legislation is passed, the regulations are approved, and the program is implemented, that the Ministry has agreed to continue to work with the Chiefs Committee to find opportunities to include band owned buildings and off-reserve citizens. As the Ontario Regional Chief, I must underscore the importance of this continued work and provide the necessary relief to our First Nation governments and citizens regardless of residence.

I believe that the Ministry of Energy has been a wonderful example that other provincial ministries could look towards, to understand what a renewed relationship with First Nations looks like. Through your leadership, we have seen wonderful policy change and positive partnerships. Positive partnerships that have not only been created just between First Nations and the Ministry, but have also expanded to include other energy organizations.

I believe that this inclusive approach has made the greatest difference, knowing that several entities are collaborating for a greater vision. This is reconciliation in action.

Miigwetch.

Isadore Day
Ontario Regional Chief

cc. Chief Ava Hill (Six Nations of the Grand River)
Chief Scott McLeod (Nipissing First Nation)
Chief Elaine Johnston (Serpent River First Nation)
Chief R. Don Maracle (Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte)
Chief Janice Henderson (Mitaanjugamiing First Nation)
Deputy Grand Chief Derek Fox (Nishnawbe Aski Nation)
Meaghan Coker (Ministry of Energy)
Michael Reid (Ministry of Energy)
Ken Nakahara (Ministry of Energy)
David Martin (Ministry of Energy)
Nathan Wright (Chiefs of Ontario)