

Opening Remarks:

- Thank you [INSERT NAME OF ELDER WHO DELIVERED PRAYER] for the opening prayer and for ensuring that today's discussion can move forward in a good way.
- And thank you [INSERT NAME] for the warm welcome and to Garden River First Nation for hosting this important discussion.
- It's a pleasure to be here with you today for the fourth meeting of the First Nations-Ontario Energy Table and it has been quite a year marked with a lot of accomplishments since we met last spring in Timmins.
- I hope you'll agree with me that the Ontario government and First Nations continue to build a up a good track record of sharing in the economic opportunities that have arisen from renewing our electricity infrastructure in supporting the wealth creation aspirations of First Nation communities.
- It was in the spirit of the Political Accord that discussions were initiated, in the fall of 2015, to look at ways of addressing the Chiefs of Ontario's concerns with broadening the ownership of Hydro One.
- A result of those early discussions was the establishment of the Negotiation Table and the Grievance Table. Collectively these three "tables" provide First Nation leadership with the opportunity to discuss key energy policy issues and seek resolution to outstanding concerns where appropriate.
- I want to acknowledge your diligence in continuing to raise the issue of the high costs of electricity affecting your communities at this table and your persistence in requesting that we look at reducing delivery charges as a solution.
- I feel we have made significant progress on a number of fronts since this time, such as the First Nation Delivery Credit, and I hope that you feel that the accomplishments over the past year have advanced reconciliation and further strengthened the unique relationship between Ontario and First Nations.

- I am happy to be back with everyone today and am very much looking forward to the conversation.

Slide Topics:

First Nation Delivery Credit:

- We have heard the concerns raised by First Nation Leadership about the high electricity costs and delivery charges impacting First Nation communities.
- I was pleased to receive both the OEB's report on the matter as well as the report from the Chiefs of Ontario.
- As you have likely heard, our Government announced plans to introduce legislation, which if passed, will enable the implementation of the OEB's recommendations.
- The resulting First Nations Delivery Credit is a reflection of your leadership on this issue and an example of the Political Accord coming to life.
- This initiative will help address some of the unique challenges that on-reserve First Nation customers face, and recognize First Nations' contribution to the provincial electricity system.
- We would like your thoughts on how we can jointly communicate the First Nation Delivery Credit.
- The First Nations Delivery Credit is part of Ontario's Fair Hydro plan which was announced on March 2, 2017 which includes the launch of a new Affordability Fund to enhance the existing OESP and Rural or Remote Rate Protection (RRRP) program and provide on-reserve First Nations households with a delivery credit.

If asked about implementation:

- It is our government's intention to move quickly to any necessary legislative and regulatory changes that, if passed, would enable implementation of the First Nations Delivery Credit.
- I recognize the importance of reducing the administrative burden on individuals to receive the credit.

- It is anticipated that there will need to be enhanced communication and information sharing between First Nation Governments and Local Distribution Companies.
- I would be interested in your thoughts on how this could be best accomplished?

If asked about Independent Power Authority (IPA) eligibility:

- At this time, only communities serviced by licensed distributors would be eligible for the First Nations Delivery Credit.
- This is partly due to the unique treatment of electricity costs and billing practices in IPA serviced communities. A delivery line credit may not be applicable in these communities.
- As you may know, the credit would function somewhat differently in communities that pay what is called a “bundled rate,” such as those serviced by Hydro One Remotes Communities Inc. In these circumstances customers would a credit for the service charge portion of their bill, as there is no delivery charge line.
- I would be interested to learn more about how this initiative could also provide benefits to IPA serviced communities.

Long Term Energy Plan

- Since the 2010 and 2013 Long Term Energy Plans, First Nation involvement in the energy sector has increased significantly which has led to enhanced economic development opportunities and advancement of the relationship between Ontario and First Nations envisioned by the Political Accord.
- I am pleased that we were able to significantly increase First Nation participation in Ontario’s energy sector through the commitments of the 2013 LTEP and will ensure that opportunities for involvement continue moving forward.
- Over the fall 2016, the Ministry of Energy held 14 First Nation engagement sessions across the province to inform the update of the LTEP.
- The First Nation sessions included participation from over 150 representatives from approximately 76 First Nation communities and organizations.
- One of the key issues raised at the First Nation LTEP sessions was the cost of electricity and the delivery charge – I am very pleased that we’ve proposed to move forward with

the First Nations Delivery Credit and to enhance other existing electricity support programs.

- Based on the IESO's Ontario Planning Outlook (OPO) the Province is in a robust energy supply situation for the next ten years and we are not procuring additional generation in the near term.
- While renewable energy opportunities have changed due to Ontario's strong energy supply position, the government remains committed to ensuring that opportunities for First Nations in the energy sector continue, including transmission, conservation and small-scale generation.
- Anticipating the need for a more distributed energy future, Ontario will be transitioning our program offerings from the microFIT and FIT to an enhanced net metering regime. The microFIT program will end December 31, 2017 and will be replaced by an updated net metering program in 2018.
- I would like to hear your thoughts on how we the evolution of First Nation involvement in the sector given the Province is shifting away from procurement of new large-scale supply in the near term?

Grievance Table

- We are making progress with the First Nations that we are currently working with through the Grievance Table process.
- I am keenly interested in making sure we can achieve meaningful outcomes with each of these First Nations. In so doing we must acknowledge that there are capacity constraints in taking on additional grievances.
- Through this kind of meaningful dialogue, I am hopeful that we can continue to develop mutually beneficial approaches in the spirit of cooperation and engagement set out in the Political Accord.
- Ontario is committed to supporting the Grievance Table process as a dedicated forum to discuss historic grievances, in parallel with, but separate from the commercial discussions related to Hydro One.

- In addition, some of the grievances raised are not within the power of the Ministry of Energy, or Ontario, to address alone. For example, the issue of *Indian Act* permits for transmission and distribution infrastructure that cross reserve lands, is a matter that in many cases involves multiple parties (Hydro One, Ontario Electricity Financial Corporation, and the federal government).
- The Ministry encourages discussion amongst the parties on these matters, and in some cases may be able to provide a more active facilitation role where a solution is not forthcoming.
- I would like your thoughts on the Grievance Process and other approaches you may have developed based on your collective experience to date.

Wealth Creation

- I am encouraged by the level of First Nation participation in energy initiatives through the 2010 and 2013 LTEPs. These initiatives will have a positive impact on long-term wealth creation for First Nation communities.
- We are looking to continue building on what has been developed and advancing these initiatives to provide greater flexibility for unique and innovative community interests.
- Ontario continues to support the development of the transmission grid connection of remote First Nation communities, led by Wataynikaneyap Power, to ensure that the remote First Nations have the transmission infrastructure needed to power and advance their socio-economic interests.
- I think you can agree that we have made significant strides in facilitating wealth creation in First Nation communities and I am interested in hearing your perspectives on how we can work together to further advance wealth creation in an evolving energy sector?

Collaborative for 2017

- ENERGY has been able to advance a positive relationship with First Nations that supports the Political Accord through implementation of the First Nations-Ontario Energy Table, the Grievance process and the commercial discussions for First Nation participation in the broadening of Hydro One ownership.

- Although the opportunities moving forward may change given the evolving sector, I look forward to continue building relationships with First Nation communities to find ways that take advantage of emerging opportunities.
- I am interested in hearing your ideas on how we strengthen our relationship in a manner that addresses our mutual interests.

Other Topics:

Hydro One and Hydro One Permits:

- I understand that there are a number of Hydro One transmission assets on reserve lands where agreements with First Nations have not yet been reached.
- We understand that Hydro One is aware of the issue and is making efforts to resolve it, however, understand there have been challenges. As discussed, this issue is a matter that in many cases involves multiple parties, such as Hydro One, Ontario Electricity Financial Corporation, and, importantly, the federal government.
- Where resolution cannot be achieved, the Ministry of Energy may be able to perform a more active facilitation role to try to ensure that the relevant parties are engaged and to foster an open and constructive dialogue.

Hydro One & Government of Ontario:

- The Province and Chiefs Committee on Energy continue to work towards definitive agreements regarding the sale of shares of Hydro One. To respect the ongoing discussions, the Province does not intend to comment further pending outcomes of that process.
- The broadening of Hydro One ownership, which includes First Nation ownership, has changed the relationship between Hydro One and the Government of Ontario.

- The Province has committed in its Governance Agreement with Hydro One to act as an investor in the company and not as a manager. Regardless of the percentage of shares that the Province holds in Hydro One, the Province can continue to implement its policy goals through policy tools such as legislation and regulations as it would with any other transmitter or distributor in Ontario.
- Ontario takes the Crown's duty to consult and accommodate First Nations and Métis very seriously. The Province will continue to make sure that it meets its Duty to Consult prior to approving any future developments of energy-related infrastructure that have a potential adverse effect on section 35 rights. The Province will also continue to make sure that Hydro One, like any other proponent, fulfills any of the procedural aspects of consultation that are delegated to it.
- I trust that First Nations will make Hydro One aware of any of the economic development and commercial interests they have as project opportunities arise.
- The government is committed to dialogue on issues of interest to First Nations, regardless of the level the Province's ownership interest in Hydro One. We therefore look forward to continuing the discussions with Chiefs of Ontario about how we can work together on matters of mutual interest in the Energy sector and to participating constructively in the forum that we have created for discussing historical grievances.

Closing Remarks:

- In closing, the energy sector is always changing and a review of the Long Term Energy Plan is upon us.
- We must embrace that change and the opportunities that it presents in the spirit of collaboration.
- Working together with you as our partners, we are committed to ensuring our energy system stays strong.
- I want to thank everyone again for taking the time to be here today for this important discussion.
- I look forward to working with you all in the coming year as we continue to make progress on our shared priorities as envisioned by the Political Accord.

- A special thank-you to Garden River First Nation for being such gracious hosts today.