

ENE Messaging: AG calling on OEB to reconsider cap and trade costs on natural gas bills

From: "Campbell, David (ENERGY)" <david.campbell2@ontario.ca>
To: "@OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management" <opo-mediarelationsandissuesmgmt@msgov.gov.on.ca>
Cc: "Moulton, Dan (ENERGY)" <dan.moulton@ontario.ca>, "Xavier, Katrina (ENERGY)" <katrina.xavier@ontario.ca>
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ISSUE: In her report last week, the AG called on the OEB to reconsider its decision not to include cap and trade costs as a separate line on natural gas bills. The Toronto Star has reported on the story.

ANALYSIS: The Star's coverage has been relatively balanced, including a quote from the OEB and the rationale for their decision. At this point, our decision won't change much from when the decision was made this summer.

MESSAGING:

- The decision of how to present cap and trade on consumers' bills was made by the Ontario Energy Board, an **independent and arms'-length regulator** for the province's energy sector.
- It did so based on **extensive consultations** with consumers, utilities and environmental stakeholders, including over 40 written submissions.
- In their decision, the Ontario Energy Board highlighted that Cap and Trade costs are part of doing the business of delivering natural gas to homes and businesses. To quote the Board: "In the OEB's view, separating out Cap and Trade related costs as a line item on the bill is inconsistent with the manner in which all other ongoing costs of operating the utility are reflected on the bill."
- The OEB has an important role to play in the energy sector. They are a **non-political, quasi-judicial** regulatory body with a mandate to protect consumers.
- The government does not have the legislative authority to make this decision, and we will respect the independence of the OEB.

Opposition Contrast

- Mr. Speaker, **the Opposition can't decide what they think** of the Ontario Energy Board.
- Sometimes, they like to **claim the OEB isn't truly independent**.
- But when the OEB makes a decision the Opposition doesn't like, they start **insisting the Government should intervene!**
- This is the sort of **flip-flopping** that just doesn't fit in responsible government.
- On this side of the House, **we respect our independent agencies**, and are not about to start interfering with a process designed to protect consumers.

David Campbell
Legislative Assistant and Issues Manager
Office of the Hon. Glenn Thibeault | Minister of Energy
416.314.0704 | 647.649.3739