

MEETING NOTE

NAME OF ORGANIZATION: Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP)

DATE/TIME OF MEETING: February 21, 2017, 4:00-4:45pm

LOCATION OF MEETING: Executive Boardroom

PURPOSE: To discuss rising residential electricity prices for seniors

ATTENDEES: **Minister of Energy**
Glenn Thibeault
Landon Tresise
Craig Ruttan (arriving late)

Canadian Association of Retired Persons
Wanda Morris; COO/VP of Advocacy
Marissa Semkiw; National Account Manager Executive / Affinity
Partnerships / Shows

OVERVIEW:

- CARP is a national not-for-profit that advocates for its members (age 50+) on a variety of issues. In late 2016, CARP launched a campaign among its membership called “Heat or Eat.”
- In its draft list of Top Six Issues for 2017, #1 is “Restore sanity to electricity rates in Ontario.”
 - Their submission notes rates are lower in Manitoba and Quebec, 60,000 Ontario customers were disconnected during 2015, and says “Seniors are penalized by the province’s peak rates as many are home during the day.”
 - Their ask: “CARP wants a minimum 25% reduction in electricity rates and the adoption of progressive rates, so that those who use little power pay a cheaper average rate than those who consume a lot of power.”
- In a survey of their members in January 2017, many members said they wanted lower rates for all residential customers, as well as those who need help the most, and many were unaware of the OESP or Energy & Property Tax Credit.
- In conversation, CARP has expressed interest in empowering seniors through more choice in pricing plans.

RECOMMENDED QUESTIONS / TALKING POINTS:

- Do you think your members would benefit from having more pricing plans available to choose from?
- Your membership includes both rural and urban seniors. Do you have any sense of how the challenges they are facing may be the same, or different?
- From your survey, it seems many seniors are not aware of programs like the OESP or the Energy and Property Tax Credit. Do you have any ideas on how we could help communicate these more effectively to seniors?

ASKS TO CARP:

- **Can you help us communicate these existing programs more effectively to seniors?**
- **Would you be a partner in supporting our work to reduce residential rates?**
- **When do you plan to release your 2017 Top Issues document?**

Background:

Ontario's Price Mitigation Programs (Residential)

Initiative	Key Information	Notes
Rate Mitigation	• \$130 – annual savings for average household (\$11 per month) via 8% bill reduction • \$540 – annual savings for eligible rural customers (\$45 per month) via Rural and Remote Rate Protection	Program took effect on January 1, 2017.
Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP)	• \$30 to \$50 – monthly on-bill rebate for eligible customers • \$45 to \$75 – monthly on-bill rebate for those with unique electricity needs	Program took effect on January 1, 2016.

Initiative	Key Information	Notes
Debt Retirement Charge (DRC)	\$65 – average annual savings for removing DRC from residential bills - April 1, 2018 – date DRC will be removed from all other bills	DRC removed from residential and small commercial bills on January 1, 2016.
Low Income Energy Assistance Program	\$500 – one-time annual emergency relief for electricity bills \$600 – if home is electrically heated \$500 – one-time annual emergency relief for gas bills	Also provides flexible customer service rules re: utility treatment of LEAP customers.
Northern Ontario Energy Credit (NOEC)	- For 2017 benefit year: \$148 – annual credit for eligible individual \$227 – annual credit for eligible family	Part of Ontario Trillium Benefit.
Ontario Energy and Property Tax Credit	- For 2017 benefit year: \$1,023 – maximum amount for individuals / families, of which \$227 is to help with the sales tax on energy \$1,1658 – maximum amount for qualifying seniors, of which \$227 is to help with the sales tax on energy	Part of Ontario Trillium Benefit.