A proposal to create Legislation.

Fair Hydro Plan Act, 2017, if enacted

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO BE ADDED BY LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL TO ANY FINAL BILL PRIOR TO INTRODUCTION.

[Insert explanatory note.]

ELECTRICITY ACT, 1998

1. (1) Section 1 of the *Electricity Act, 1998* would be amended by adding the following clause:

[Note: GGRA provisions have been removed for now. Please confirm if they should be re-inserted.]

(2) Clause 1 (f) of the Act would be struck out and the following substituted:

(f) to protect the interests of consumers with respect to the adequacy, reliability and quality of electricity service;

(f.1) to protect the interests of consumers with respect to the prices they pay for electricity, including protection of those interests through the Hydro financing initiative;

[Note: Since the Hydro financing initiative is a defined term and is clearly required to be implemented under the new substantive provisions of the Act, I'm still not sure why this needs to be addressed in the purpose clause. However, I have included a purpose provision as per your instructions.]

x. Subsection 2 (1) of the Act would be amended by adding the following definitions:

"Financing Entity" means the trust established by Ontario Power Generation Inc. under clause XX (a) or the entity prescribed for the purposes of clause XX (b); ("French")

"hydro financing initiative" means those policies of the Government of Ontario related to its decision to ensure costs to Ontario electricity consumers are allocated fairly over time, taking into account the useful life of new sources of and technologies for electricity; ("French")

[Note: I have applied the precedent of the "smart metering initiative" as per your instructions. Just want to reiterate my concern that the reference to government policies is really vague (which initiative/ policies? At which point in time?) and I think this could cause lots of confusion, particularly if the policies evolve over time. It could also have unintended consequences.]

[Note: To consider -- by describing the initiative as we have in the above definition, we are potentially linking the deferred amount to amounts that would otherwise be paid for by consumers as part of the GA. If the deferred amounts are not all about "the useful life of new sources and technologies" then the description of the initiative should likely be broadened. (For example, if some of the deferred amount may be used to cover high wholesale prices, one could argue that the initiative is NOT about allocating costs fairly over time… it's just about pushing the cost increase to future consumers without considering what is "fair" across the generations.]

x. (1) Subsection 6 (1) of the Act would be amended by adding the following clauses:

(q.1) to enter into agreements or arrangements with the Financing Entity;

(q.2) to engage in activities related to making payments to and receiving payments from the Financing Entity under Part V.2, as required under this Act, and to engage in related settlement activities;
Note: Is some of this covered already by clause (i)? Could we address this by expanding upon clause (i)? Trying to understand whether there is any potential overlap.]

(q.3) to engage in activities related to the [sale/disposition/conveyance/assignment] of the [right/regulatory asset] created under section XX, which activities may include,
[Note: As discussed, please confirm terminology.]

(i) incurring liabilities in relation to the [right/asset];

(ii) [selling/assigning/disposing of?] the [right/asset] to the Financing Entity;

(iii) assigning [the right/asset] to third parties;
[Note: I don't understand (iii) -- I thought the rights to the asset were being assigned to the trust and nobody else?]

(q.4) acting as a recovery agent for the Financing Entity in relation to [the right/asset];

x. (1) Subsections 25.33 (1) and (2) of the Act would be repealed and the following substituted [TBD].
[Note: As per our telephone discussion today (March 27), there seems to be ongoing debate about the policy direction:

1. Do you want to amend the GAM so that the money received from the FE and the money recovered by the FE are part of the initial GA calculation?

2. Do you want to leave the GAM section as is and add a requirement (in a new section) for the IESO to conduct additional adjustments for a subset of the payments referred to in s. 25.33? This second adjustment would be engaged in after the existing GAM is calculated. So it would be a further adjustment of what has already been adjusted under the GAM.

Until this fundamental question is answered, we are removing the proposed amendments to s. 25.33.]

x. Subsection 53.1 (1) of the Act would be repealed and the following substituted:

Objects of Ontario Power Generation Inc.

53.1 (1) The objects of Ontario Power Generation Inc. include, in addition to any other objects, the following:
[Note: I know that the words "in addition to any other objects" appears in the current provision, but it seems very odd. This suggests that the objects are unlimited, which doesn't seem to be the intention but I could be wrong.]

1. Owning and operating generation facilities.

2. Establishing, operating and supervising the activities of entities for the purposes of supporting and promoting the government's hydro financing initiative.

3. Providing financial and other support to the IESO in its activities in relation to the hydro financing initiative.

4. Engaging in such financing, borrowing, lending and related activities and transactions to support the IESO with short-term or long-term financing.

5. Providing equity, not exceeding the prescribed amount, to support the financing capacity of the Financing Entity.

Subsidiaries

(1.1) Ontario Power Generation Inc. may create one or more subsidiaries in order to more efficiently conduct its activities or achieve its objects.

x. Section 53.2 of the Act would be repealed and the following substituted:

Rights of the Minister[1]

53.2 (1) The Minister, on behalf of Her Majesty in right of Ontario, may acquire, hold, dispose of and otherwise deal with securities or debt obligations of, or any other interest in, Ontario Power Generation Inc. or any of its subsidiaries.

Agreements

(2) The Minister, on behalf of Her Majesty in right of Ontario, may enter into any agreement or arrangement that the Minister considers necessary or incidental to the exercise of a power under subsection (1).

x. The Act would be amended by adding the following Part:

PART V.2
HYDRO FINANCING INITIATIVE

[Note: TBD where to place this Part within the Act and how to structure this Part. Temporary number (e.g. A1, A2, A3 etc.) has been used for now.]

FINANCING ENTITY

Financing Entity, established or prescribed

A1. (1) For the purpose of accomplishing the hydro financing initiative, the Minister may,

(a) direct Ontario Power Generation Inc. to establish and operate a trust; or

(b) direct Ontario Power Generation Inc. to [oversee? Administer?] an entity prescribed by the regulations.

[Note: Would the direction of the Minister include any additional instructions re timing etc.?]

Duty of Ontario Power Generation Inc.

(2) Ontario Power Generation Inc. shall comply with the direction of the Minister.

[1] FLS - this provision is based on s. 49 of the Act

[Note: Once OPG takes action under A1 in accordance with the Minister's direction, what happens if at some point in the future, the Minister wants a different entity to take over the role of the FE? Is this a concern that needs to be addressed?]

Object of Financing Entity

A2. (1) The object of the Financing Entity is to finance the amounts required to accomplish the hydro financing initiative.

[Note: We are imposing several obligations on the Financing Entity (FE). As a practical matter, how will these obligations be enforced? Who will be responsible for meeting these obligations? (e.g. would there be directors or officers of the trust?). Or will the OPG be responsible for meeting these obligations as the body that establishes/manages the trust or oversees the designated entity?]

Activities

(2) To achieve the object, the Financing Entity shall engage in the following activities:
[Note: Just want to confirm that this should be "shall" and not "may".]

1. Borrowing funds from the Financial Corporation or from such other persons or entities [as may be prescribed?].

2. Investing funds.

3. Making payments and loans to the IESO or such other entity as may be prescribed in accordance with the regulations [or an order of the Board].

[Note: I think it would be best to specify whether the rules would be set out in a reg or in a Board order to avoid confusion.]
[Note: Should the "loans" language be removed, since you noted that the IESO is not "borrowing" from the FE?]

4. Receiving payments from the IESO or such other person or entity as may be prescribed in accordance with the regulations.

5. Issuing securities or debt ***[in the manner prescribed?].***

6. Engaging in any activities, including entering into such transactions, agreements or arrangements as may be prescribed and in accordance with the regulations.

Board review of expenditures, etc.

A3. (1) The Financing Entity shall, at least 60 days after the end of each fiscal year, submit its expenditures relating to its operations for the fiscal year including the expenses it has charged to Ontario Power Generation Inc. or the IESO, or that it has been charged by the Financial Corporation, in relation to those operations, to the Board for review. [Note: The list of items that have to be reported on could be more prescriptive (e.g. specifying specific amounts to be set out) or it could also allow for the Board to specify what it wants to see in the report. Let me know if you'd like to adjust the wording of the requirement.]

Board recommendations, etc.

(2) The Board may review the expenditures and charges referred to in subsection (1) and make recommendations to the Financing Entity as are appropriate in order to ensure the most efficient operation and management of the Financing Entity in order to protect consumers.
[Note: Rather than saying "in order to protect consumers", should this say "in order to achieve the object of the FE"? Or perhaps this could just be deleted altogether with no need for replacement language.]

Deemed assets, entity,

A4. Despite any other provision of this Act or the *Business Corporations Act,* the assets and liabilities which are resident in and form part of the property of the Financing Entity shall not form part of the assets and liabilities of Ontario Power Generation Inc. or any of its subsidiaries for any purpose.
[Note: You posed a question about excluding an OPG subsidiary from this rule. Please instruct.]

OBTAINING FINANCING

[Note: It will be important to read all of the provisions that follow against the provisions in the existing Act, to ensure there is no overlap/confusion being created due to potential interactions between existing authority and new authority. The drafting focus so far has just been to get the relevant substantive provisions into the draft without evaluating how they fit into the broader scheme of the Act.]

Ontario Power Generation Inc. to obtain financing

A5. (1) The IESO may <u>direct Ontario Power Generation Inc. to cause the Financing Entity</u> to engage in any of the following activities in order to accomplish the hydro financing initiative:
[Note: As a practical matter, how would OPG "cause the FE" to do these things? How is this different from "directing"?]

1. Financing, borrowing or lending to provide the IESO with short-term or long-term financing.

2. [Purchasing/receiving/obtaining the right created under section XX] and making any payments to the IESO that relate to the IESO's activities in support of the hydro financing initiative.

[Note: Not sure if the regulated assets would always be "purchased" or if other terminology might be needed. Please advise.]

3. Collecting from the IESO amounts that the IESO is required to pay in relation to its activities in support of the hydro financing initiative.

4. Assigning its [the IESO's?] rights to all or part of the regulatory assets established under section XXXX.

[Note: What is para. 4 about? If this is about forcing OPG to make the FE do things, then does this belong in the list? I thought that it was only the IESO that would be assigning the rights to the FE]

5. Such other activities as may be prescribed.

Same

(2) Ontario Power Generation Inc. shall comply with a direction under subsection (1) within the time specified in the direction [and any prescribed rules?].

IESO to enter into transactions

A6. (1) The IESO shall, in order to support the achievement of the hydro financing initiative, enter into transactions with the Financing Entity <u>or any other entity</u> for such amounts as are necessary to support the hydro financing initiative.

[Note: My understanding is that the need for "or any other entity" stems from the need to allow for the IESO to obtain temporary financing in the immediate term, before it is able to access the FE. Do you want to narrow this so that the IESO is only authorized to do this before the FE is up and running? Or do you want to keep it available on an ongoing basis?]

Same

(2) In entering into transactions under subsection (1), the IESO shall comply with the regulations.

RIGHT OF RECOVERY [CREATION OF REGULATORY ASSET]

[Note re the following provisions:
I found a provision dealing with the concept of "regulatory asset" in Bill 210 from 2002 (see s. 79.13 of the OEBA). It deems certain things to be regulatory assets but does not say much more. On the phone, you noted that the term "regulatory asset" does not have any legal meaning on its own but is just an accounting term that has been used to describe

the statutorily created right of recovery. However, you also said that there may be a need to use this term in order to convey the intended meaning from an accounting perspective.

In order to ensure that the drafting captures the policy intent, please answer/address the following questions:

1. Should we be creating a statutory right of recovery or deeming certain amounts to be a regulatory asset? You said you'd consult on whether the regulatory asset terminology is important to flag in the Bill.

2. You said you're not sure whether or not the Act will require the IESO to sell/assign the right. Please instruct. If it is optional for the IESO to sell/assign, then it seems that the right could in theory remain with the IESO (unless you are saying that the statute can just create the right of the FE to recover without any need for the right to be assigned/sold by the IESO… in which case please explain why we need to deal with the sale/assignment at all). Please clarify.

3. I'm assuming that if we are creating a right, then the right must be held by someone (e.g. the IESO) before it can be assigned/sold? So should the right be created in the Act for the IESO (e.g. the IESO has a right to recover the amounts from distributors and prescribed consumers) since the IESO would then sell/assign/transfer the right to the FE? The FE must also have the right to recover from the IESO itself, so that creates an extra complication.

4. Should there be some indication of when the right of recovery/regulatory assets will no longer continue to exist (e.g. once all of the amounts have been paid?). I notice that your instructions below about the debt indicate that the debt is no longer owing once the amounts are paid, but do we need to indicate that the regulatory asset also ceases to exist at that point?

Right of recovery created

A7. A right to recover the following amounts in full from the IESO, distributors and prescribed consumers is created.

1. The [deferred amount].

2. The amounts of costs relating to the operation or management of the Financing Entity, as are approved by the Board.

[Note: How will the Board be approving these costs? Is this related to the expenditure report submitted to the Board? That provision dealing with Board expenditures doesn't refer to any approval taking place… just a review and recommendations.]
[Note: Need to mention expenditures?]

3. Other amounts as may be prescribed or as may be approved by the Board.

Note: Are you going to be saying anything about how the interest will be calculated?

Sale [and/or?] assignment of [right? Regulatory assets?]

A8. (1) The IESO [may? Shall?], in accordance with the regulations, sell [and/or?] convey to the Financing Entity the right to recovery created established under section A7 on such terms and conditions as are provided for by the Financing Entity.

[Note: Your instructions include the terms "sell", "assign" and "convey" -- which are correct?]

[Note: Your instructions suggested that something other than the "regulatory assets" may need to be assigned to the FE. Are you referring to the "warehousing" liabilities assumed by the IESO in the early days? What else would need to be assigned? Could these items be listed above in A7 or is there a reason why they need to be kept separate?]

Sale deemed final

(2) The sale and conveyance referred to in subsection (1) is deemed to be final for all purposes.

[Note: What is this intended to achieve? Is this based on precedent language that has been interpreted to have the desired effect?]

Debts

(3) For greater certainty, the [amounts to which the FE has a right of recovery] are debts owing by the IESO, distributors and prescribed consumers to the Financial Entity until the amounts have been fully paid and fully discharged.

[Note: Why is subs. (3) necessary? Isn't it inherent in the sale of the regulatory assets that the FE would have acquired the future right to collect these amounts? Perhaps it is unclear that the amount can be collected from not just the IESO but from others down the chain. But isn't that what the "right of recovery" section above is meant to cover?]

[Note: I haven't checked to see how other similar provisions dealing with debts are drafted. Not sure we need the "for greater certainty" and also not sure what the distinction is between "fully paid" and "fully discharged". This provision will need further consideration. You also noted that you may want to specify who determines when all obligations have been satisfied.]

IESO to recover amounts

A9. The IESO shall recover the amounts set out in section A7 from distributors and prescribed consumers, in accordance with […]:

Note: how are the requirements that would determine recovery for this subsection meant to interact with the GAM reg?

[Note: The following two subsections are placeholders. You noted that *the provision is going to have to evolve to deal with consumers who exit the grid (disconnect) completely* *either because they leave the province or they decide to generate their own electricity and completely disconnect. You also want to be able to prescribe* methods of ensuring that the amounts required cannot be "by-passed". I'll need to understand what is meant by "by-passed".]

Distributors liable

(x) The IESO and distributors are entitled to compensation for any shortfall in relation to the amounts the IESO must pay to generators, the Financial Corporation or other persons including prescribed persons, under section 25.33 resulting from the IESO's activities under the hydro financing initiative.

Consumers liable

(X) Prescribed consumers are required to contribute towards the amount of any compensation referred to in subsection (4) in accordance with the amounts and methods prescribed by the regulations and such amounts shall not be by-passed.

USE OF FUNDS TO REDUCE ELECTRICITY BILLS

[Note: Depending on how things land with s. 25.33, this might be a place to explain how the transactions between the IESO and the FE translate into reduction in the electricity bills of RPP consumers. Regulations could specify how the IESO would ensure that the short-term rate reductions that flow from the FE amounts are only received by the targeted class of consumers and that this same class of consumers is the only class responsible for the repayment of FE funds in the long-term.]

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD ACT, 1998

x. Subsection 1 (1) of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998* would be amended by adding the following paragraph:

6. To facilitate the implementation of the [hydro financing initiative].

[Note: Would need to link with definition in the EA or else spell out the definition here - TBD.]

x. Section 27.1 of the Act would be amended by adding the following paragraph:

Hearings

(1.1) A directive may specify whether the Board is to hold a hearing, the circumstances under which a hearing may or may not be held and, if a hearing is to be held, the type of hearing to be held <u>and the time within which it must be held</u>.

The underlined is what makes this different from the other provisions in the Act that basically have the same wording. There are already a number of places in the Act where you have this type of hearings provision re directives (e.g., s. 27.2 (7)). If you basically want the same authority in each instance, then the wording should be consistent in each case. There are already some discrepancies between the current provisions (e.g., s. 27.2 (7) talks about types of hearings, whereas s. 28 (2) doesn't). Differences in wording will typically be presumed to be differences in meaning. So, the question is what you're intending to authorize in each case, and whether differences are intended. If you want the same thing everywhere, it should all be worded the same. Let me know.

[Note: Waiting for confirmation whether amendments to s. 78.7 are needed. Please advise.]

x. Section 79.16 (3) of the Act would be repealed and the following substituted:

Adjustment to eliminate variances

(3) In determining rates under clause (1) (b), the Board shall take into account balances in variance accounts established under section 25.33 of the *Electricity Act, 1998* and, subject to section X of that Act, make adjustments with a view to eliminating those balances within 12 months or such shorter time periods as the Minister may direct. [Note: Please let me know what section the highlighted portion is supposed to refer to… is it the provision that says the IESO has the 30 year period to pay off the amount in the variance account for the hydro financing initiative? I wonder if this is confusing and whether the amendment to subs. (3) above works… it almost seems unnecessary to say that the Board has to "take into account" this balance, given that we are setting up a bunch of very specific rules about what has to be done by various entities in order to eliminate this amount. What would the Board be expected to do with information about this variance account? For consideration.]

Timing

xx. This Act would come into force, if approved, on either a date specified in the legislation or on a later time to be stipulated by the Government.

~~**Commencement**~~

~~**xx. This Act would come into force on [insert commencement rule]**~~