

Northwatch Submission

Bill 150

Green Energy and Green Economy Act, 2009

An Act to enact the Green Energy Act, 2009 and to build a green economy, to repeal the Energy Conservation Leadership Act, 2006 and the Energy Efficiency Act and to amend other statutes

April 22, 2009



Northwatch

1. Northwatch is a public interest organization concerned with environmental protection and social development in northeastern Ontario. Founded in 1988 to provide a representative regional voice in environmental decision-making and to address regional concerns with respect to energy, waste, mining and forestry related activities and initiatives.
2. Northwatch has a long term and consistent interest in energy issues in Ontario, including and particularly with respect to the generation, transmission and conservation of electricity and related planning matters and approaches. Ontario.
3. In particular, Northwatch's interests are with respect to electricity generation and transmission in northeastern Ontario, conservation and efficiency measures, and rates and rate structures. Northwatch is a coalition of community and district based environmental, social justice and social development organizations.

Bill 150 - General

4. In general, we support the *Green Energy Act, 2009* and the purposes outlined in its preamble, those being to foster renewable energy as a replacement for non-renewable and less environmentally acceptable options such as coal and nuclear, to that the public sector conserves and makes efficient use of energy, and to promote and expand energy conservation by all Ontarians.
5. Putting conservation first and giving priority to renewable energy supplies are essential elements to becoming environmentally sustainable and socially and environmentally responsible; no other course of action would be consistent with a commitment to addressing climate change.

6. While we generally support the *Green Energy Act, 2009* and what we recognize to be many excellent intentions, there are several amendments that are required, as outlined in our comments below, including amendments to direct that electricity planning be done on a regional basis, and to clarify that energy from solid waste is not a “renewable” energy project.
7. We have a general and persistent concern that the real-world outcome of Bill 150 is largely dependent on regulations and standards which have not yet been developed; furthermore, we have a concern that the process for developing those standards and regulations may exclude residents and public interest organizations, such as Northwatch, who are resident in northern Ontario.

Schedule A - Green Energy Act, 2009

8. We strongly support public agencies and prescribed consumers being required to prepare and energy conservation and demand management plan; such a requirement should be part of the approvals process for industrial activities such as mining, manufacturing, or wood processing.

Schedule B - Electricity Act, 1998

9. The definition of “renewable energy generation facility” should clarify that “waste used to generate electricity” does not include solid waste; the definition could include the capture of methane gas from organic wastes that have been disposed of in a solid waste landfill, but must not include solid waste thermal treatments.
10. A section should be added specifying that the Minister may direct the Ontario Power Authority to conduct electricity demand and supply planning on a regional basis; planning elements would include doing load forecasting on a regional basis and planning and procurement which results in a regional balance of demand and supply of electricity; public consultations related to plan development would have a regional focus.

11. We support the development of a feed-in tariff program that is designed procure energy from renewable energy sources on a priority basis; the directives should include the adoption by the OPA of a regional approach.

Schedule C - Ministry of Energy Act

12. The objectives of the Ministry should include fostering a regional approach to electricity conservation, supply, demand, and planning.
13. Generation systems which utilize solid waste should not be included in a program to encourage, promote or develop projects to increase the availability of electricity in Ontario, give that they are inherently unsustainable and encourage a poor use of resources and discourage conservation initiatives such as re-use and recycling.

Schedule D - Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998

14. A paragraph should be added to Subsection 1(1) of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998* that directs the Board to evaluate electricity supply plans for their integration of regional demand-supply balancing into provincial plans.

Schedule F - Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993

15. We strongly support the expanded role of the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario; this expansion of the Commissioner's role must be accompanied by an increasing of resources for the Commissioner's office in order to allow these new responsibilities to be effectively met.

Schedule G- Environmental Protection Act

16. Generation systems which utilize solid waste should not be included in a program to encourage, promote or develop projects to increase the availability of electricity in Ontario, give that they are inherently unsustainable and encourage a poor use of resources and discourage conservation initiatives such as re-use and recycling; the proposed substitutions for Sections 40 and 41 of the *Environmental Protection Act* should be re-written to make clear what waste types are being referred to (ie wood waste, agricultural waste, food waste) and to clarify that solid waste is not part of a renewable energy program.

Conclusion

17. In addition to the above-noted concerns, we question the removal of a municipal role in local land use decisions, and would prefer to see a more positive approach taken.
18. Notwithstanding the above, we believe the *Green Energy and Economy Act, 2009* represents a positive approach to reducing and meeting the electricity needs of Ontarians.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Brennain Lloyd', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Brennain Lloyd
on behalf of Northwatch