

Ministry of Energy

Ministère de l'Énergie

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Sessional Paper No. P-82

Petition related to repealing wind turbine projects (Sessional Paper No.82 P-82), Mr. McDonnell (Tabled October 5, 2015)

Ontario is committed to a clean, reliable and affordable energy system. Ontario's *Green Energy and Green Economy Act, 2009* continues to benefit our economy by creating a new generation of jobs, while protecting our environment. The province's energy system relies on a balance of resources, including renewable resources such as wind and solar power, which are an important part of Ontario's energy mix.

We have eliminated coal and replaced it with cleaner energy sources that are cleaning up the air, protecting the health of Ontarians and reducing the province's environmental footprint. Our Government is committed to protecting the health of Ontarians.

We have listened to concerns from communities regarding siting of large renewable energy projects, including wind projects, and that's why we have changed how these projects are developed in Ontario.

The new competitive Large Renewable Procurement (LRP) program has been designed to provide municipalities with a stronger voice in the development of renewable energy projects. The Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) consulted with the public, municipalities, Aboriginal communities and other groups on the design of the LRP program.

The LRP program includes mandatory engagement requirements that are intended to facilitate early relationship-building between the developer and the local community, so that local needs and considerations are taken into account before a proposal is even submitted. Points will also be allocated to proposals that demonstrate community engagement over and above the mandatory requirements. Proposals that receive more points are expected to have an increased likelihood of success. However, a lack of points does not mean a project will not move forward.

For more information on the LRP program, please see the Ministry of Energy's guide for municipalities, *Renewable Energy Development in Ontario: A Guide for Municipalities*, available on the Ministry's website: www.energy.gov.on.ca/en/renewable-energy-development-in-ontario-a-guide-for-municipalities/

The IESO released the LRP I Request for Proposals in March 2015. The proposal submission window closed on September 1, 2015. A total of 103 proposals were submitted, representing 3,613 MW of proposed capacity. LRP I has a procurement target 565 MW.

The IESO is responsible for administering the LRP program, including the evaluation and selection of proposals. The Ministry of Energy is not involved in the proposal submission or evaluation process, and does not communicate with the IESO regarding specific project proposals.

Following the completion of LRP I, the IESO will be engaging with municipalities, Aboriginal communities and stakeholders regarding the LRP I process to ensure that any learnings and opportunities for improvement are taken into account in subsequent LRP procurements. I would encourage you to participate in this process.

Additionally, large-scale wind energy projects in Ontario are subject to the Renewable Energy Approval (REA) regulation, which includes minimum setbacks for wind energy projects, environmental studies and community consultation requirements.

Wind project developers must also address potential negative effects on birds and bats and their habitats during the planning, construction and operation of projects.

The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change is proposing to update the noise guidelines for wind farms. These changes would reflect new manufacturing standards and advancements in renewable energy technology.

The proposed regulation amendments also address public and industry concerns and would provide greater clarity as large renewable projects are planned. We will continue to honour existing Feed-in Tariff contracts for wind projects. Renewable energy projects must meet all applicable approvals and contract requirements before they can begin construction.

On November 6, 2014, Health Canada released preliminary findings from its study into the relationship between wind turbine noise and human health.

Health Canada has indicated that the preliminary findings do not support a link between wind turbine noise and health impacts including sleep disturbance, chronic health conditions, perceived stress and quality of life. Initial peer reviewed results confirm these preliminary findings.

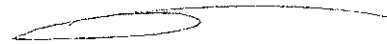
The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change has reviewed the preliminary findings of the Health Canada study and initial peer reviewed results and looks

forward to reviewing additional peer reviewed results as they continue to become available.

Further questions with respect to the Health Canada study are best directed to the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change.

With regard to wind projects and property values, Ontario's Municipal Property Assessment Corporation released a study in 2014 which concluded that proximity to a wind turbine does not have an impact on the market value of property, based on sale prices.

Moving forward, we will continue to balance the five key principles of our Long-Term Energy Plan: cost-effectiveness, reliability, clean energy, community engagement and putting conservation first.



The Honourable Bob Chiarelli
Minister