



September 19, 2021

Submitted online to the Standing Committee for Environmental Protection, Water and Waste Management

RE: motion on phase-out of gas-fired electricity generation, scheduled for September 20, 2021

File: ACS2021-OCC-ENV-0004

Ottawa Wind Concerns is a citizens' group that was formed in 2009, when the rural residents of North Gower-Richmond in Ward 21 were threatened with a proposal for a large and inappropriate wind power project that would have been too close to homes in the area, and which was not needed for power generation at the time. Since then (the power project did not go ahead) we have monitored the situation regarding industrial-scale wind power development. We had the support of our former MPP Lisa MacLeod and are currently supported by MPP Goldie Ghamari, and MP Pierre Poilievre.

We are disappointed in the content of the motion put forward by Councillor Menard. Of course, everyone wants the best for our environment. This motion, however, appears to be unsupported by more than a few statements made without references, and betrays a lack of awareness of the reality of Ontario's power grid.

It is also inappropriately timed. The Independent Electricity System Operator or IESO has already addressed the issue of a natural gas phase-out and is currently engaged in a detailed and comprehensive Impact Assessment. We do not understand why this simplistic motion is being made now, when the IESO will soon present facts and analysis that will be important to effective energy planning for Ontario.

In a presentation made in May by Chuck Farmer, Senior Director of Power System Planning for the IESO, the benefits of natural gas power generation were listed. Natural gas generation provides:

- Intermediate and peaking capacity
- Energy production capability and
- Local supply reliability and
- Reliable operating reserve

Chief among these benefits is the ability of gas generation to respond quickly to system conditions, which is critical in times of extreme weather conditions.

This is echoed by Ontario's professional engineers, as described in the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers or OSPE [submission](#) to the IESO, dated June 16, 2021, and which is attached to these comments. Key comments:

OSPE is supportive of the goal that long-term energy planning in the province is to ensure **reliable, cost effective, affordable, and sustainable energy systems**. This is critical to guarantee affordable energy prices to all end users, ensure the competitiveness of industrial and commercial customers and foster a healthy provincial economy that protects the environment and enables the province to meet its targets for greenhouse gas emissions and conservation. To fully achieve this, **a long-term approach with the entire economy must be considered**.

The OSPE advised against a phase-out of natural gas generation by 2030 as it is simply not realistic and does not allow for use of new technologies. The OSPE advised that the assessment extend past 2040:

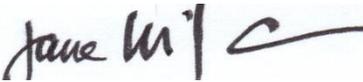
This will enable the impact of clean technologies planned to become commercially and economically available beyond 2030 to be taken into account in the assessment. The installation and implementation of these clean technologies will ensure **that the Provincial Power System (PPS) can continue to be clean, reliable, resilient, cost-effective and affordable**. It is important that the assessment recognizes the planned commercial availability of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and Hydrogen Technologies by 2030.

In short, it is simplistic and short-sighted to simply demand the phase-out of natural gas plants in favour of wind and solar power. Wind power in particular is intermittent and unreliable, and in Ontario, is out of phase with demand. It is popular to claim that wind power replaced coal in Ontario but that is incorrect: coal was replaced by nuclear and natural gas.

The purpose of this comment document is not to defend natural gas power generation but to plead with the Standing Committee on Environmental Protection, Water and Waste Management, that the City of Ottawa has an opportunity here to engage in meaningful long-term energy planning and to champion new energy technologies such as the nuclear energy technologies that could mean a safe, clean reliable power supply as well as good Canadian jobs, and the promotion of a made-in-Canada technology.

Ontario's experiment with industrial-scale wind power has not been a success. Two Auditors General noted that cost-benefit and impact analyses were never done, with the result that Ontario has overpaid by billions for this unreliable source of power generation. The Association of Ontario Food Banks in their 2016 annual report blamed Ontario's high electricity bills for the "energy poverty" its members were experiencing. Grid-scale wind also has a significant negative impact on the environment for little or no benefit. Wind turbines require a great deal of land and are considered a source of "energy sprawl." The effect on rural communities is negative and far-reaching: the turbines turn quiet communities into vast "resource plantations." This contradicts Ottawa's policies that the city values its rural areas, and wants to protect important agricultural land.

Rather than engaging in the political theatre of demanding a hurried natural gas phase-out and ignoring a thorough analysis of the impacts, Ottawa could choose instead to be a leader and move forward with better technology for a better future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Wilson" followed by a stylized flourish.

Jane Wilson, RN, B.A.

Chair, OTTAWA WIND CONCERNS

North Gower ottawawindconcerns@gmail.com

Ottawa Wind Concerns is a community group member of the Wind Concerns Ontario coalition