



MOHAWKS OF THE BAY OF QUINTE

KENHTEKE KANYEN'KEHÁ:KA

ADMINISTRATION, 13 Old York Rd., Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory, ON K0K 1X0
Phone 613-396-3424 Fax 613-396-3627

November 4th, 2014

Lenore Robson
Policy Advisor – Consumer Service
P.O. Box 2319
2300 Young Street, 27th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M4P 1E4

**Re: Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte Stakeholder Input on LEAP initiative.
Board file number: EB-2014-0227**

Dear Ms. Robson:

The purpose of this letter is to offer MBQ's input regarding the LEAP initiative. We suggest means at addressing the current crisis regarding the rapid increase in the cost of utilities in Ontario. After receiving and reviewing the LEAP package from you, a telephone call on November 4th, 2014 was made to voice the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte's concerns with the program.

The following concerns were brought forth at the meeting and require to be brought forward at the November 6th meeting in Toronto:

1. If resources are available, clients approach our office for assistance with a disconnection notice with their hydro bill, social workers work with all other agencies (LEAP, Emergency Loan Program, United Way etc.) to assist in the client's emergency situation. Often times, with all of the agencies involved, client needs can be addressed in partnership. If this new program will be a monthly credit-based program, and rates will increase over the next 3 years, this lessens the tools that social workers have to alleviate emergency situations such as disconnections;
2. If the new Ontario Electricity Support Program is going to be offered to qualified clients by monthly credit on their hydro bill, and hydro rates are going to increase by 30% over the next 3 years, the credit must be higher than the increase to benefit the clients. Any benefit provided should at minimal cover full increase of the bill (30% over 3 years) plus all additional new fees over the fee increases;
3. Given the unique situation on a First Nations Community such as existing land claims that service providers are utilizing to generate and distribute Hydro, a 50% Aboriginal discount for all First Nations is requested. We believe that other First Nations would agree to this as well;
4. The distribution/delivery/charges should be decreased substantially by 100% given that most First Nation communities are poor and plagued with high unemployment. The Crown is to ensure that First Nations citizens enjoy a beneficial interest from First Nation traditional territories. This is in

keeping with the Tsilhqot'in Decision. Utility companies have on file, Indian status cards to claim tax exemption and such a measure would not be costly to implement and would not create an administrative cost burden;

5. Concerns that there will not be enough revenue in the LEAP and OESP to help all who need to access the program (could impact vulnerable clients such as seniors who may rely on hydro to run or charge up any medical equipment needed, this includes air conditioning in extreme heat and obviously heat in extreme cold weather);
6. While we can provide proof of income by having client or employee send pay stubs, banking information etc., we cannot be responsible to monitor changes in the case where an ongoing discount is applied to and offered;
7. Some of the existing resources used to help support seniors in our community are no longer options to access so will there be any consideration to senior population priority as there may be other resources available to ODSP/OW clients not accessible to seniors? Seniors who own their homes would not necessarily have other housing options but would need to ensure bills are covered still and receive less.
8. Would like better marketing in place for FN communities so they know about these programs on the onset.
9. Would like to know outcome/review after program has been in place two years.
10. The majority of First Nations are marginalized and have low income.

Thanks for giving us the time to provide our input. We look forward to seeing a consolidated report of the concerns that are brought forward.

Yours sincerely,



R. Donald Maracle
Chief, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte