

Matthew McLeod

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Subject: Opposition to Proposed Electrical Rate Increase by Essex Powerlines

Dear Ontario Energy Board Members,

I am writing to formally express my opposition to the proposed electrical rate increase by Essex Powerlines. This increase is unwarranted for several reasons and poses a significant hardship on the residents and businesses within the affected area.

Firstly, the economic climate remains fragile, with many families and businesses still recovering from the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. An increase in electrical rates would exacerbate these financial challenges, leading to higher living costs and potentially forcing businesses to scale back operations or close entirely. This is particularly concerning for low-income families and small businesses that are already operating on tight budgets.

Secondly, Essex Powerlines should be required to demonstrate substantial efforts in cost-saving measures before any rate increase is considered. Here are several suggestions for internal cost-saving measures that Essex Powerlines could implement:

1. **Operational Efficiency:** Essex Powerlines should conduct a thorough review of their operational processes to identify inefficiencies. Streamlining operations and adopting best practices from industry leaders can significantly reduce operational costs.
2. **Energy Loss Reduction:** Investments in modern infrastructure and technology to reduce energy loss during transmission and distribution can lead to significant savings.

This not only improves efficiency but also reduces the overall demand for energy production.

3. **Administrative Costs:** The company should look into reducing administrative expenses by adopting digital solutions and automating routine processes. This can include transitioning to paperless billing and improving customer service through automated systems.

4. **Employee Training:** Investing in employee training and development can enhance productivity and efficiency, leading to better performance and reduced operational costs in the long run.

5. **Renewable Energy Investments:** By increasing investments in renewable energy sources, Essex Powerlines can reduce its reliance on more expensive and volatile fossil fuels, ultimately lowering costs.

Additionally, before any rate increase is approved, Essex Powerlines should be mandated to provide a comprehensive report detailing the specific measures they have undertaken to reduce costs and improve efficiency. This transparency is crucial in ensuring that the company is doing everything within its power to manage its expenses responsibly before passing costs onto consumers.

In conclusion, the proposed rate increase by Essex Powerlines is not justified given the current economic conditions and the potential hardships it would impose on the community. I urge the Ontario Energy Board to deny this rate increase and require Essex Powerlines to focus on internal cost-saving measures. Ensuring that the company is operating as efficiently as possible is a necessary step before considering any rate adjustments.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Matthew McLeod