

June 17, 2021

Susanna Zagar  
Chief Executive Officer  
Ontario Energy Board  
2300 Yonge St., 27<sup>th</sup> Floor  
P.O. Box 2319  
Toronto ON M4P 1E4

Dear Ms. Zagar,

I am writing to provide the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) with an update on the COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program (CEAP).

As you know, CEAP has been offered by utilities, at the direction of the OEB and with funding from the Government of Ontario, since July 2020. CEAP was created as a time and funding-limited program to provide relief to electricity and natural gas customers who had fallen behind on their energy bills as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to the diligent efforts of the OEB and Ontario's utilities in delivering CEAP, program uptake has been good and the funds provided for CEAP have been used for their intended purpose. I am pleased that CEAP has met its objectives and assisted more than 62,000 Ontario households and more than 13,000 small businesses.

In 2020, the government provided \$17 million in CEAP funding to help residential, small business and registered charity customers through the first phase of the pandemic; earlier this spring, an additional \$23 million was approved for CEAP given the ongoing need to support Ontario energy customers through the pandemic. Energy, Northern Development and Mines (ENDM) is aware that the OEB has nearly completed allocating this funding to utilities based on program demand.

At this time, I can confirm that no additional program funding will be provided. As such, I ask that the OEB take whatever prudent steps it considers necessary to manage CEAP to its conclusion. ENDM trusts that the OEB will ensure that remaining funds are distributed to customers in need to the fullest practical extent, while at the same time working with utilities to endeavour to ensure that they do not accept applications from customers that cannot be funded from the program.

Thank you again to you and your staff for your close and productive collaboration with ENDM in the design and delivery of CEAP over the past year and a half, and for your continued efforts to protect Ontario's energy customers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stephen Rhodes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephen" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Rhodes".

Stephen Rhodes  
Deputy Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines

Cc:

Harneet Panesar, Chief Operating Officer, OEB

Brian Hewson, Vice President Consumer Protection & Industry Performance, OEB

Aaron Silver, Chief of Staff to the Hon. Greg Rickford, Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines

Steen Hume, Assistant Deputy Minister – Strategic, Network, and Agency Policy Division, ENDM