

Ministry of Energy and Mines

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MC-994-2026-1045

August 17, 2026

Geoff Owen
Chair
Ontario Energy Board
2300 Yonge Street, 27th Floor
PO Box 2319
Toronto ON M4P 1E4

Dear Mr. Owen:

Thank you for submitting the Ontario Energy Board's (OEB) 2026-2029 Business Plan (the Plan) and budget for my review. I am pleased that the Plan builds on the priorities set out in my Letter of Direction issued on December 15, 2025, and continues to advance the implementation of Ontario's first Integrated Energy Plan (IEP), *Energy for Generations*, and the related Implementation Directive.

As Ontario works to protect our province, strengthen energy security, and build a more resilient economy, the OEB's role as Ontario's independent energy regulator is central to delivering affordable, secure, reliable, and clean energy for families and businesses. This includes supporting timely infrastructure investment and advancing the economic growth objective now formalized for the OEB through the *Protect Ontario by Securing Affordable Energy for Generations Act, 2025*.

I would like to recognize the concrete progress the OEB has delivered over the past year in advancing the priorities set out in the Letter of Direction and IEP. The launch of the Centralized Capacity Information Map, the report on Streamlining Ontario's Electricity Connection Framework, establishing clearer pathways for distributor-led local electricity Demand Side Management (eDSM) and non-wires solutions, and the OEB's ongoing work to modernize its own processes and improve transparency, timeliness, and efficiency for consumers, utilities, and project proponents was essential.

I appreciate the OEB's continued work to advance the remaining expectations of the IEP Directive and next steps for implementation in alignment with the Ministry and IESO, including for the Gas-Electric Co-ordination Forum, Regional Planning Reforms, the Distribution System Operator Roadmap, and Distributed Energy Resources (DER) Valuation work.

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The Plan reflects a focused and sequenced approach to advancing a broad and interdependent set of priorities, while maintaining the OEB's core adjudicative and regulatory functions. This approach will support timely delivery of priority commitments identified in the Plan while ensuring related workstreams proceed in a coordinated and achievable manner.

In particular, I acknowledge the work related to the OEB's potential mandate expansion to address emerging energy resources, including hydrogen and carbon dioxide pipelines, district energy systems, and long-duration storage technologies such as pumped storage which will be sequenced and resume in 2027/28, informed by ongoing Ministry-OEB engagement on scope and sequencing. This sequencing reflects the interdependencies between mandate expansion and related planning and policy work currently underway, including the OEB's broader mandate review, and will be informed by ongoing Ministry-OEB engagement on scope and timing.

This letter constitutes my approval of the Plan, including its focused and sequenced approach to delivery, and the proposed 2026-2027 budget of \$66.8 million.

In approving this Plan, I would like to highlight the following ongoing expectations of the OEB:

- Continue delivering the priority initiatives and advancing workstreams identified in the Plan with transparency, discipline, and a focus on outcomes for consumers, ratepayers, and the sector, in accordance with the timelines and milestones the Plan sets out;
- Continue regular engagement between senior Ministry and OEB officials to discuss progress, dependencies, and emerging risks, particularly for Mandate Expansion and other interdependent workstreams where scope and timing remain to be confirmed;
- Provide clear reporting in future Annual Reports, Business Plans and other updates on progress against the commitments in the IEP Directive, my Letter of Direction and this Plan, including the priority initiatives advancing in the current planning period and the items proceeding in later phases.
- As the Minister responsible for the OEB, I am accountable for ensuring that the OEB is using ratepayer-funded resources as prudently and efficiently as possible. I expect that the OEB will continue to meet its requirements under the Agency and Appointments Directive.

As Ontario's energy sector continues to evolve, it has never been more important that the OEB move with purpose, transparency and efficiency. I am confident that by executing this Plan, the OEB will continue to protect the interests of consumers, support the reliability and affordability of Ontario's energy system, enable clean energy, and contribute to the government's vision of a more competitive, self-reliant, and resilient economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Lecce', with a stylized, flowing script.

Stephen Lecce
Minister

c: Carolyn Calwell, Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Energy Board
Matt Hiraishi, Chief of Staff to the Minister of Energy and Mines
Susanna Laaksonen-Craig, Deputy Minister of Energy and Mines