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Risks and Benefits of Energy East Need Better Balance

Toronto, ON - The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) today released "*Giving Ontarians a Voice on Energy East*," a report on its consultation and review of the proposed Energy East Pipeline.

At the request of the Minister of Energy, the OEB led an open and impartial review of the potential benefits and impacts of the proposed Energy East from an Ontario perspective. After the most comprehensive consultation it has ever undertaken, the OEB has determined that there is an imbalance between the economic and environmental risks of the Project, and the expected benefits for Ontarians. The OEB's advice set out in this report is intended to ensure a better balance between the risks and benefits for Ontarians.

"The primary concerns of Ontarians are about pipeline safety, and the impact of Energy East on their lakes, rivers and drinking water in the event of a spill," says Rosemarie Leclair, Chair and CEO of the OEB.

Leclair noted that Ontario government policy requires that pipeline projects in Ontario have the highest available technical standards for public safety and environmental protection. They must also have demonstrable economic benefits for Ontarians. Ms. Leclair says, "We cannot state that the project meets the highest available technical standards, as the proponent, TransCanada Pipelines Ltd, has not yet filed a complete application. Our review has also determined that the economic benefits for the province are likely to be modest."

The report made a number of recommendations to lessen the environmental impact of the project, and recommends that TransCanada ensure communities near Energy East have an ongoing role in the operation and construction of the proposed pipeline. "Community engagement should be seen as another aspect of the life-cycle approach for operating Energy East," says Leclair. "We also believe that treaty and Aboriginal rights must be respected."

The report, including the full list of recommendations and a backgrounder on the consultation and review, are available from our Newsroom at www.ontarioenergyboard.ca/OEB/Industry/Media+Room/News+Releases . Summaries from our meetings and the reports of our technical advisors are posted on the OEB's Energy East website: www.ontarioenergyboard.ca/oebenergyeast .

The OEB is confident that its advice will help inform the Ontario government prior to its intervention at the National Energy Board (NEB) hearings on Energy East. Approval of the pipeline project lies with the NEB and the federal government.

The Ontario Energy Board is an independent and impartial public regulatory agency. We make decisions that serve the public interest. Our goal is to promote a sustainable and efficient energy sector that provides consumers with reliable energy services at a reasonable cost.

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