

**Ministry of Energy and Mines**

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MC-994-2025-1161

August 1, 2025

Mr. Geoff Owen  
Acting 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) 2025-2028 Business Plan (the Plan) and budget for my review. I am pleased to see that the plan builds on the priorities contained in my Letter of Direction issued on December 19, 2024.

Specifically, I appreciate the efforts made by the OEB in advancing the Letter of Direction when it comes to integrated energy planning, last mile connections, grid reliability and resilience, the natural gas system, energy efficiency and regulatory efficiency.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of the OEB in continuing to advance its Performance Measurement Framework through the Performance Measurement score card. I encourage the OEB to engage with the ministry as it continues to improve the scorecard and its outcome measures of success.

I appreciate the OEB's progress in the ongoing digital transformation through the Business Operations Optimization and Systems Transformation, and I look forward to seeing improved service standards and reduced costs for both adjudicative and non-adjudicative functions through the improvements to the information management systems and the implementation of new AI tools.

This letter constitutes my approval of the Business Plan, including the proposed 2025-2026 budget of \$70.3 million. In approving this year's Plan, I would like to highlight some of my ongoing expectations of the OEB:

- The release of Ontario's first Integrated Energy Plan, and the related Implementation Directives to both the Independent Electricity System Operator and the OEB, sets a critical foundation to support the implementation of the *Protect Ontario by Securing Affordable Energy for Generations Act, 2025*. As detailed in the OEB Directive, I expect the OEB will work diligently to implement several actions, including:
  - Identifying electricity system planning process improvements to support growth and establish forums and requirements to support better coordination of electricity and gas planning and modelling activities.

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- Supporting the role of existing and emerging fuels and energy resources, including by considering the government's Natural Gas Policy Statement and exploring the expansion of its mandate to include hydrogen, carbon capture and storage, district energy systems and pumped storage.
  - Streamlining OEB-led and overseen permitting, approvals and connections processes, as well as reviewing and improving processes related to Distributed Energy Resources (DER) information sharing, system planning, and regulatory and compensation frameworks.
- I understand the 2024 Letter of Direction sets an ambitious agenda for the OEB, and the additional staff capacity proposed in the Plan will help the organization deliver on this successfully. As the Minister responsible for the OEB, I have accountability for ensuring that the OEB is using ratepayer-funded resources as prudently and efficiently as possible. I expect that prior to additional hiring that the OEB ensure all efforts are made to repurpose existing positions according to government priorities.
  - I also look forward to regular updates to discuss progress on the Plan and understanding any challenges encountered along the way. Additionally, on-going engagements between senior Ministry and OEB staff will be helpful in tracking progress in these areas. As part of these engagements, I expect that the OEB will include additional details in its future Annual Reports which set out how the new positions identified in the Plan are being deployed to support and achieve the OEB's strategic priorities and objectives, the progress made against these deliverables with the additional supports in place, and where relevant, how the OEB's Performance Measurement Framework might reflect the impact of the additional positions.
  - As Ontario's energy regulator, it has never been more important that the OEB be able to move at the speed of the market. As we build new homes, attract new investments and electrify industry and transportation with an Ontario-first approach, I expect the OEB to play a crucial role in the thought leadership on policy development, and innovation to ensure every family and business has access to clean, affordable and reliable energy.

I am confident that by executing this Plan with transparency and efficiency, the OEB will demonstrate to the energy sector and the public that it will continue to focus on outcomes that promote the interests of consumers and stability and sustainability of the energy sector.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Lecce', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Stephen Lecce  
Minister

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