

Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce “leading the charge” on increased affordability and transparency for energy system
Local business group calls on government to adopt auction style process when procuring for future sustainable energy supply

Chatham-Kent, Ontario, December 15, 2016: The Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) is calling on the provincial government to take bold steps to address the affordability challenge of energy pricing in Chatham-Kent. In its submission on the Long Term Energy Plan (LTEP), the organization is calling on government to ensure that future policies regarding energy pricing are affordable, transparent and flexible. One of the submission’s top recommendations includes a call for the adoption of a capacity market system.

Under the new Climate Change Action Plan, businesses are already facing additional costs. Since the 2013 LTEP, industrial rates in the province have increased by 16 percent, while the rate for households and small businesses have climbed by 25 percent. The OCC and its members have consistently reported that the price of electricity is undermining business’ capacity to grow, hire new workers, and ultimately remain competitive.

“Ontario is at a turning point in its planning process regarding the future energy needs of the province. In order for businesses in Chatham-Kent to grow and succeed, it is imperative that future energy policies respect the concerns of businesses and support future economic growth. A vast array of energy sources are available, and all aspects need to be considered for value to end user with a balance in sustaining an environmentally conscience province.” said Gail Hundt, President & CEO.

Ontario’s energy system would benefit from the implementation of a capacity market. Under this structure there would be significant cost-savings for Ontario’s energy consumers through procuring shorter term supply on a cost efficient basis. For a capacity market to be successful in Ontario, the system would feature an auction style process where resources, such as generation facilities, imported resources, electricity storage and demand-side resources, are compensated for the potential energy they could produce.

“As the provincial government seeks to find solutions to the province’s energy challenges, Ontario must strive to balance objectives regarding climate change, renewable resources and maintaining a diverse supply mix without forfeiting the competitiveness and transparency of the capacity market system,” said Allan O’Dette, President and CEO of the OCC. “This will result in increased accountability and confidence in the energy market for Ontario businesses.”

While the Ontario government is to be commended for some of the results it has achieved on the energy file (such as being a world leader in renewable energy resources) the status quo is presently unsustainable for ratepayers.

Media Contact:
Gail Hundt
Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce
E: gail@chatham-kentchamber.ca
T: 519-352-7540 ext. 22