



The Honourable Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Justin Trudeau  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, On

October 31, 2022

Dear Prime Minister:

We have serious concerns about the Ontario Government's plans to ramp up the use of gas-fired power plants, and to build new gas-fired power plants, to meet the province's electricity needs.

Ontario's electricity plan will produce nearly a five-fold increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from Ontario's electricity system relative to 2017. The closure of Ontario's coal-fired power plants reduced climate emissions from Ontario's electricity sector from 35.4 million tonnes (MT) in 2005 to 2.5 MT in 2017. This was one of the greatest gains for climate stability in this country's history. It reduced Ontario's overall climate emissions by about 16% and Canada's by [4.4%](#).

The current plan would increase emissions from Ontario's electricity sector to [nearly 12 MT in 2030 and 18.4 MT in 2040](#). This, at a time when the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has made it clear that the whole world must halve its emissions by 2030 and reduce them to net zero by 2050 in order to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees C. In fact, when the [full life-cycle](#) of gas-fired power plants is considered, the climate impacts associated with Ontario's gas-fired power plants would be very similar to those associated with the five coal plants that were closed. This plan will make it very difficult for Canada to meet its climate commitments under the Paris Agreement.

Climate change is already having a profound impact on global health. Low-income countries that have contributed the least to climate change are often hardest hit, while countries with the highest standards of living, such as Canada, are among the greatest emitters of climate emissions. In recent months, 1.5 million people in [Nigeria](#) have been displaced by floods that have killed more than 600 people; 13 million people are facing [famine](#) in the Horn of [Africa](#); and 33 million in Pakistan have been displaced by [floods](#); situations that have been amplified by climate change.

We in [Canada](#) are no longer immune to the impacts of climate change. Over the last two decades, we have experienced floods, mudslides, droughts, ice storms, wildfires, hurricanes, tornadoes, and heat waves with greater frequency and/or intensity. In Northern communities, where temperatures have increased the most, people are struggling with melting permafrost, unreliable ice roads, and disruptions in local and imported food supplies.

These changes have increased the risk of traumatic deaths, injuries, hospital admissions, chronic diseases, and mental stress for residents across the country. Right now, hundreds of thousands of people in [Western Canada](#) are being exposed to "[air quality that is off the charts](#)" because of wildfire smoke. A few weeks ago, half a million people in [Atlantic Canada](#) lost their power and many lost their homes to Hurricane Fiona. And in June of 2021, hundreds of residents in British Columbia lost their lives to the punishing [heat dome](#); many of whom lived alone or in low-income neighbourhoods with few trees and no air conditioning.

Ontario's electricity plan will increase air pollution in heavily populated areas in Southern Ontario that already experience poor air quality. The common air pollutants – nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), ground-level ozone, and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) – are responsible for approximately 6,600 premature deaths per year in Ontario; [outcomes valued at \\$49.2 billion per year](#). While gas plants burn much cleaner than coal-fired power plants, they do release substantial quantities of nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) which can harm human health directly, in the form of NO<sub>2</sub>, and indirectly when transformed in the atmosphere into ground-level ozone and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. A study conducted in the United States (US) found that significant health benefits can be realized by avoiding the use of gas plants. The Rocky Mountain Institute has estimated that [\\$23 to \\$74 billion in health-related impacts](#) could be avoided in the US over a 20-year period if gas-fired power plants proposed at the end of 2021 were not built.

Ontario can move to a [clean electricity future and lower energy costs by 2030](#) by investing in alternatives such as energy conservation, building retrofits, wind and solar energy, and increasing its electricity cooperation with Quebec, including using its neighbour province's reservoirs to serve as a giant storage battery for Ontario's wind and solar energy.

In your March 22, 2022, Supply and Confidence Agreement with Mr. Jagmeet Singh, you pledged to "achieve significant emissions reductions by 2030 compared to 2005 levels." **We are asking you to keep this commitment by establishing Federal Clean Electricity Regulations that: prohibit the building of new gas plants in Ontario effective immediately; and require Ontario to move to a net zero-carbon electricity grid by 2030.** Your leadership on this issue can provide our children with healthy air, a stable climate, and a livable planet.

Your Sincerely,



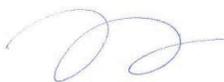
Kim Perrotta MHSc  
Executive Director, CHASE



Lisa Fortuna  
President, CIPHI-Ontario



Raissa Marks  
Executive Director, CAPE



Jacqueline Avanthay-Strus  
Executive Director, CANE



Dr. Mili Roy, Chair  
CAPE-Ontario Regional Committee

- cc. The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, PC, MP, Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
The Honourable John Wilkinson, PC, MP, Minister of Natural Resources  
The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, PC, MP, Minister of Health