

April 15, 2025

Hon. Stephen Lecce
Minister of Energy and Mines
10th Flr, 77 Grenville St.
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2C1

RE: Ontario Business Imperative: Energizing Ontario's Economy

Dear Minister Lecce:

Congratulations on your re-election and renewed mandate to protect Ontario's economy and enhance its competitiveness. The Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) looks forward to working with you and your government to drive inclusive, sustainable economic growth.

Today, I write on behalf of our [Energy Policy Council](#), a group of business leaders from a wide range of energy related sectors, including industry associations, regulatory bodies, and energy producers and distributors, to provide recommendations that will strengthen Ontario's long-term energy security and competitiveness.

Our energy diversity is essential to driving our economic growth, whether that comes from continued investment in clean energy or from conventional sources that power our energy-intensive sectors. Ontario already benefits from one of the cleanest energy grids in the world and has taken meaningful steps to build a more reliable, affordable and sustainable energy system, from advancing small modular reactors (SMRs) to recent actions on energy efficiency, affordability and clean fuels.

Despite this progress, critical gaps remain, particularly in distribution system upgrades, transmission corridor planning, and regulatory coordination. Addressing these challenges will be essential to meeting rising electricity demand, supporting the evolving needs of Ontario's business community, and positioning Ontario as a global energy powerhouse.

As the legislature resumes, the Ontario Chamber urges your government to build on this foundation by delivering a forward-looking, resilient energy strategy that drives economic growth, strengthens communities, and enhances Ontario's global competitiveness.

1. **Accelerate energy infrastructure and long-term energy planning:** Meeting Ontario's growing energy demand will require coordinated and bold action across planning, investment, and regulatory systems. A strategic and data-driven approach – backed by stakeholder collaboration – is essential to ensure clean, affordable and reliable energy supports Ontario's economic growth.
 - o Collaborate with industry, Indigenous communities, and municipalities to finalize and implement the Integrated Energy Plan, ensuring it addresses electricity and low-carbon fuel needs, enables regulatory conditions for an “all-of-the-above” energy strategy that includes both clean and conventional energy sources, incorporates

insights from Ontario's Electrification and Energy Transition Panel report, and provides a clear roadmap for the province's energy future.

- o Expand investments in baseload generation and a diverse mix of clean energy sources, including large-scale nuclear, SMRs, hydroelectricity, wind, solar, and forest biomass, to meet projected electricity demand while maintaining system reliability and affordability.
 - o Enhance transmission and connections planning by improving information sharing, accelerating pre-development activities, and ensuring the connections framework enables regional economic development, particularly in high-growth and resource-intensive areas such as Northern Ontario. This includes opening Crown land for wind projects and maximizing the use of existing corridors such as the Parkway Belt West Plan.
 - o Streamline regulatory and environmental approvals by harmonizing federal and provincial processes for clean energy projects. Ontario should also clarify land use policies and the role of municipalities in local energy planning to reduce delays and improve coordination.
 - o Engage with governments across Canada to commit to a national energy corridor to facilitate the movement of oil, natural gas, electricity, hydrogen and other resources from east to west and to our northern ports, opening up both internal and new export markets.
2. **Driving innovation and climate solutions:** Ontario is well-positioned to lead in clean energy innovation. By leveraging emerging technologies and expanding low-carbon energy sources, the province can accelerate progress towards net-zero while enhancing sustainability and economic competitiveness.
- o Expand investments in diverse clean energy and low-carbon sources, such as biomass, biofuels, hydrogen, and renewable natural gas, by upgrading existing facilities, attracting new developments, and defining medium- and long-term supply targets. Exemptions from competitive assessments for certain low-emission technologies should also be considered.
 - o Leverage Ontario's existing clean energy assets by expanding funding for collaborative postsecondary research and industry innovation, driving technological advancements and supporting the province's clean energy transition.
 - o Collaborate with the federal government to expedite implementation of the Clean Electricity Investment Tax Credit and ensure Ontario-based projects benefit from this support.
 - o Advance a "Made-in-Ontario" clean energy supply chain and address cross-border trade issues to strengthen energy sovereignty and economic development.
3. **Addressing the talent supply gap:** Accelerating affordable energy projects requires access to a skilled workforce capable of adapting to evolving technological and regulatory demands. This means partnering with the Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security, post-secondary institutions and industry to target investments focused on supporting both short-term sector needs and long-term workforce readiness.

- o Align workforce planning with market needs by strengthening data sharing, forecasting, and collaboration between industry, training providers, and government.
- o Expand partnerships with post-secondary institutions to support the development of new programs, micro-credentials, and hands-on learning opportunities in areas such as clean energy, electrification, and grid modernization.
- o Work with other provinces and territories to eliminate barriers to interprovincial labour mobility and credentialing to ensure Ontario's energy sector has access to a larger pool of talent.

I would also like to congratulate you on your new mandate to unlock the potential of Ontario's mining sector. To that end, the Ontario Chamber recently launched a mining initiative, and we look forward to working collaboratively with your ministry to seize on this generational opportunity to accelerate resource development and export.

As we deal with shifting economic headwinds, there has never been greater need for a proactive policy strategy supports the industries of today and strengthens foundation for the industries of tomorrow.

Sincerely,



Daniel Tisch
President & CEO
Ontario Chamber of Commerce

- c. Hon. Sam Oosterhoff, Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries
Chris Benedetti, Chair, OCC Energy Policy Council & Managing Partner, Sussex Strategy