

MegaWHAT? Queen's Park Rally

October 23, 2008, 11:30 A.M

Speaking Notes For

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Ontario Clean Air Alliance

The Ontario Power Authority (OPA) is proposing to build a very big and very inefficient gas-fired power plant in Northern York Region (NYR). According to the OPA, the proposed power plant is needed to keep the lights on during those very hot summer days when our air-conditioners are running full out. This proposal does not make sense.

The proposed power plant is too big, too costly and too polluting.

First, the proposed power plant is too big. If this plant is built then NYR's total electricity supply capacity will be *double* its peak day demand for electricity.

Second, the proposed power plant is too costly. It will cost over a quarter of a billion dollars to build. It doesn't make sense to spend a quarter of a billion dollars to build a power plant that will have an average annual capacity utilization rate of less than 2%.

Third, the proposed power plant is too polluting. The OPA bureaucrats are proposing to build a power plant which will have an energy efficiency of only 36%. As a result, its greenhouse gas emission rate will be *double* that of a high-efficiency gas-fired power plant.

In short, the OPA bureaucrats are proposing a stale, out-of-date 1950s solution to meet NYR's electricity needs in the twenty-first century. This doesn't make sense for NYR and it doesn't make sense for Ontario.

Over...

The good news is that Ontario has a tough new Energy Minister who is willing to shake-up the OPA bureaucrats. As you know, on September 17th George Smitherman sent the OPA bureaucrats back to the drawing board to develop a better plan for Ontario. Specifically, Minister Smitherman told the OPA that he wants to see more emphasis on: energy conservation and efficiency; renewable energy; pumped storage to meet our peaking needs; and small-scale, high-efficiency distributed generation. Minister Smitherman has told the OPA to come back with a better plan by March 2009.

However, despite Minister Smitherman's directive to develop a new plan, the OPA bureaucrats are still planning to sign a contract in December 2008 for the construction of a big, inefficient power plant in NYR. That is, they are still planning to proceed with their old plan to meet NYR's needs. This is not right. And it is directly contrary to the spirit of Minister Smitherman's directive.

So it is time for George Smitherman to shake up the OPA bureaucrats once again. It is time for George Smitherman to tell the OPA bureaucrats that they must not sign a contract for a new power plant in NYR before they have developed a smart new plan to meet NYR's and Ontario's electricity needs.