

Open Letter to NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh

October 26, 2022

By Email: Jagmeet.Singh@parl.gc.ca

Mr. Jagmeet Singh, M.P.
Leader of the NDP
House of Commons
Ottawa

Dear Mr. Singh,

Your March 22, 2022, *Supply and Confidence Agreement* with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau pledged to “[achieve significant emissions reductions by 2030 compared to 2005 levels.](#)” Canadians view this pact as proof of your commitment to climate action through cuts to Canada’s production of greenhouse gases. They trust that you and the Prime Minister will fulfill your Agreement and deliver on this promise.

However, Ontario Premier Doug Ford has announced plans that threaten your ability to follow through on your Agreement. This fall, Premier Ford’s government stated that it will build *new* gas-fired power plants while increasing the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of the province’s *existing* gas plants by 375% by 2030 and more than 600% by 2040.

This new plan is a clear and unequivocal threat to Canada’s ability to meet its Paris Agreement climate targets. It will cancel out half the pollution reduction benefits Ontario achieved by phasing-out its dirty coal-fired power plants.

And this plan to take Ontario and Canada backward gravely imperils the ability of you and the Prime Minister to deliver on the commitment you made to Canadians in your Agreement.

Fortunately, Ontario has realistic, achievable options at hand that offer viable alternatives to the Ford Government’s ill-advised directions.

Ontario can move to a [clean electricity future and lower energy costs by 2030](#) by investing in energy conservation and efficiency, wind and solar energy, and by 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.

According to a report released by Ontario’s Independent Electricity System Operator on September 30, 2022, Ontario can avoid the need for *new* gas plants and lower its electricity costs by up to **\$290 billion** [by investing in zero-carbon options](#) to keep our lights on, including solar power, energy storage and smart efficiency programs.

As you know, [Canada has had nine climate plans since 1990 and has failed to meet any of their targets](#). According to federal Environmental and Sustainable Development Commissioner Jerry DeMarco, Canada has been the worst performer among G7 nations on meeting climate targets since the Paris Agreement was adopted in 2015.

We need strong leadership from you to ensure that Canada meets its Paris Agreement climate targets.

During the 2021 federal election you promised to move Canada to a net zero-carbon electricity grid by 2030. Furthermore, your March 2022 Agreement with Prime Minister Trudeau obliges you to “identify ways to further accelerate the trajectory to achieve net-zero emissions no later than 2050.”

Now is the time to act.

Please ensure that Prime Minister Trudeau establishes federal Clean Electricity Regulations that will a) prohibit the building of new gas plants in Ontario effective immediately; and b) require Ontario to move to a net zero-carbon electricity grid by 2030.

Thanks to the phase-out of dirty coal power and its proximity to Quebec, Ontario is well positioned to lead among Canadian provinces when it comes to achieving a net zero electricity system. Given Ontario’s lack of progress in reducing climate damaging emissions, it is important to clearly convey to the province the need to take action to meet its own 2030 targets, rather than regressing and harming Canada’s climate action objectives.

Moving Ontario to a zero-carbon electricity system will help grow the provincial economy by attracting businesses looking for clean energy. It will also create vast new economic opportunities in renewable energy development, district energy, load control technologies, cold climate air-source heat pumps, and bi-directional chargers which will allow our electric vehicles’ batteries to provide power back to the electricity grid during peak demand hours.

With strong leadership and continued climate action advocacy from you and the NDP, we can create a cleaner, safer, and more prosperous future for Canadians and the world.

Yours sincerely,

Jack Gibbons, Ontario Clean Air Alliance

Raissa Marks, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment

Mitra Yakubi, Canadian Federation of Students Ontario

Keith Brooks, Environmental Defence

Doris Grinspun, Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario

Ann Truyens, AWARE Simcoe

Kim Perrotta, Canadian Health Association for Sustainability and Equity (CHASE)

Mili Roy, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment Ontario
John Anthony Stephenson, Citizens Climate Lobby – Toronto West Chapter
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Sue McKenzie, Climate Action Muskoka
Lyn Adamson, ClimateFast
Evan Ferrari, eMERGE Guelph Sustainability
Carol Essex, Etobicoke Climate Action
Rick and Lyn Folkes, Folkes Construction Inc.
Marianne Ariganello, For Our Kids Ottawa-Gatineau
Brianne Whyte, For Our Kids Toronto
Terry Cassidy, Councillor in the City of Quinte West
Joyce Hall, Just Earth
Tom Shea, Northumberland Blue Dot
Mili Roy, Ontario Climate Emergency Campaign
Jacinta McDonnell, Plant Based Treaty
Julia Morgan, Pocket Change Project
Jeremy Milloy, Providence Centre for JPIC
Mary Jane Patterson, Reep Green Solutions
Claire Malcolmson, Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition
Lyba Spring, Seniors for Climate Action Now!
Jay Scott, StopPlastics
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