



February 6, 2015

Ontario Energy Board  
Energy East Consultation  
Via email: [energyeast@swerhun.com](mailto:energyeast@swerhun.com)

The Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of Commerce is the “voice of business” representing the interests of nearly 2,000 members from Kenora and Rainy River in the West to Marathon and Greenstone in the East. We appreciate the opportunity to provide our comments regarding the Energy East Pipeline conversion project.

We support the six principles outlined by the Ontario Government for consideration in the assessment of this project:

- Pipelines must meet the highest available technical standards for public safety and environmental protection
- Pipelines must have the world leading contingency planning and emergency response programs
- Proponents and governments must fulfill their duty to consult obligations with Aboriginal communities
- Local communities must be consulted
- Projects should provide demonstrable economic benefits and opportunities to the people of Ontario, over both the short and long term; and
- Economic and environmental risks and responsibilities, including remediation should be borne exclusively by the pipeline companies, who must also provide financial assurance demonstrating their capability to respond to leaks and spills

We are confident that aligning with these principles will provide a sound basis for approval of the Energy East Pipeline project.

### **Community Engagement**

NOACC is encouraged to see the significant outreach that TransCanada has been engaged in across the Northwest to educate the community on the project and listen to concerns from citizens. It is our understanding that meetings are ongoing with municipal leaders and First Nations communities across Ontario in addition to community open house events and one-on-one meetings.

### **Local Economic Benefit**

In our discussions with TransCanada representatives, we have been advised that they intend to use local contractors and suppliers whenever possible to ensure that the economic benefits of construction and operation remain in our region. The current conversion plan indicates that Northwestern Ontario will require eleven (11) pumping stations, which will create both construction and long term operating positions as well as indirect employment through sourcing

of supplies and services. In addition to employment, each pump station will provide revenues to local communities through municipal property tax levies. Many of the small communities along the pipeline are facing challenging economic times and the addition of jobs and tax revenues will be most welcomed.

### **Environmental Impacts & Public Safety**

We are cognizant of the environmental concerns that pipelines present and we believe that TransCanada must be held to the highest standards in protecting our natural resources and ensuring that emergency plans are in place to minimize the damage caused by any possible leak. We also acknowledge that the shift to pipeline transmission from the current road and rail transportation options will reduce the potential for accidents.

Natural Resources Canada has indicated that “Pipelines are the safest and most environmentally friendly way of transporting oil over long distances. Pipeline companies are subject to various regulations and are required to meet specific standards. The NEB’s regulations require a pipeline company to create a management system and protection programs that anticipate, prevent, manage and mitigate potentially dangerous conditions associated with their pipelines.”<sup>i</sup>

In conclusion, the Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of Commerce is supportive of the conversion of the natural gas line to transport crude oil and the positive economic benefits that this project will accrue to our region.

Sincerely,



Nathan Lawrence  
President

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<sup>i</sup> Government of Canada <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/energy/infrastructure/5893#h-3-1>