



Press Release
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Ecology Action Centre Rejects NSPI Rate Settlement *“Cost-Effective Options are Being Overlooked”*

Halifax – The Ecology Action Centre is refusing the support a settlement brokered between the most powerful interveners at the NSPI Rate Case hearings before the Utility and Review Board. A settlement was negotiated over the weekend between NSPI and some of the largest customers with regards to fuel costs that will still result in a rate increase, but less than originally proposed by NSPI.

The Ecology Action Centre was not part of the weekend negotiations, and it does not intend to support any rate increase because they argue cost-effective options are being overlooked.

“We won’t support another rate increase to buy more of the fossil-fuels responsible for global warming pollution, not when we could be saving money through energy efficiency and increasing our use of renewable energy,” said Energy Coordinator, Brendan Haley.

The Ecology Action Centre says a rate increase is unjustified because the utility is not investing in options that ensure it will not have to buy the fossil fuels that are driving up electricity rates in the first place. The EAC wants the UARB to follow the example of jurisdictions throughout North America by requiring NSPI to invest in energy efficiency if it helps save money by avoiding fossil fuel costs.

In addition to efficiency options, wind, solar, and tidal energy developments are essentially power plants without fuel costs, says the Centre. Given the volatility of international fossil fuel markets it makes good economic sense to invest in renewable energy technologies.

“Everyone in Nova Scotia should be outraged that we continue to bicker about fuel costs while we are neglecting the abundant, clean and lower-cost option of saving energy and lagging behind in our the development of renewable power projects that have no fuel costs!” said Brendan Haley.

The Centre says we have things backwards since Demand Side Management hearings have been delayed for a year and renewable energy projects are frequently not built in the province due to NSPI’s bidding system. The Centre predicts that the endless cycle of rate hearings are likely to continue until the government orders NSPI to make efficiency investments and adopts an aggressive renewable energy policy.

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