

# BRIEFING NOTE: Energy Efficiency Goal

## Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act

March 2022

### GOALS IN EGCCRA

---

#7 (b) to support, strengthen and set targets for energy efficiency programming while prioritizing equitable access and benefits for low income and marginalized Nova Scotians;

(e) to adopt the 2020 National Energy Code for Buildings within 18 months of it being published by the Government of Canada;

(f) to require any new build or major retrofit in government buildings, including schools and hospitals, that enters the planning stage after 2022, to be net-zero energy performance and climate resilient;

(g) to encourage landlords who currently lease office space to Government to transition existing office space to meet net zero energy performance;

(h) to prioritize leased office accommodations in buildings that are climate resilient and meet net-zero energy performance starting in 2030; (i) to decrease greenhouse gas emissions across Government-owned buildings by 75% by the year 2035;

### OUR ANALYSIS OF THE GOALS:

---

While goals 7 (f), (g) and (h) are good targets, the overarching efficiency goal in 7(b) is a missed opportunity, as it is very vague. We need an overarching energy efficiency target, and have been recommending a goal of increasing the level of total electricity system efficiency (through demand side management) to three per cent per year by 2030.

## **ANALYSIS CONTINUED:**

---

An energy efficiency goal should receive the same priority as the renewable energy target, especially since energy savings deliver significant within province economic and social benefits which reduce the province's reliance on meeting energy generation goals through imports.

Likewise, 7 (e) is a missed opportunity, which threatens to lock-in unnecessary GHG emissions.

## **ACHIEVING AND EXCEEDING THE GOAL:**

---

Three immediate steps that can be taken in the pursuit of the recommended goal are:

1. The purchase of more demand-side management programming through Efficiency Nova Scotia.
2. The adoption of a tiered energy building code as a regulatory tool to steadily increase building energy efficiency and ultimately reach net-zero energy-ready performance in all new construction by 2030.
3. Nova Scotia should immediately commit to a policy investing in a phased upgrade to all affordable housing to becoming net-zero energy ready.
  - This has begun through joint federal-provincial investments in public housing across Nova Scotia. These upgrades, based upon Housing Nova Scotia's website, will support jobs, reduce operating costs and decrease greenhouse gas emissions in all 51 communities. Further benefits would flow to these locations with a commitment to the policy noted above.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

---

- Increasing electricity system efficiency requires increased investment. For example, the annual investment in energy efficiency in 2018/2019 was \$34.92 million. This resulted in approximately a one per cent total electricity system efficiency.
- According to a report commissioned by Efficiency Nova Scotia in 2019, there would be \$85 million more available for spending on incentives and \$23 million more available for program delivery if the total efficiency rate in Nova Scotia rose to the goal of having total electricity system efficiency (through demand side management) to three per cent per year by 2030.
- Increasing the level of total electricity system efficiency to three per cent per year is reasonable and projected to result in reduced money spent by the consumer and reduced demand, thereby limiting the need for new electricity system infrastructure.
- Building upon its strengths and assets, Nova Scotia can work toward the increased electricity system efficiency with limited market disruption, a point confirmed in Province of Nova Scotia Tiered Building Energy Code Readiness Assessment.
- The Government of Canada has also shown leadership in energy efficiency by enhancing federal sustainability goals. In its The Greening Government Strategy, Canada's target is to achieve 40 per cent GHG emissions reduction by 2025, and net-zero emissions by 2050 throughout federal operations. By doing more, Nova Scotia strives to stay with the national trend and continue its pursuit of sustainable living.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTINUED:

---

- Nova Scotia has a strong history of energy efficiency programming and in demonstrating leadership on building energy performance. The report, Province of Nova Scotia Tiered Building Energy Code Readiness Assessment, commissioned in part by the Province of Nova Scotia, specifically notes some of Nova Scotia's energy-related achievements including:
  - Being the first province "to establish a dedicated energy-efficiency utility, the first to adopt the 2015 iteration of the National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings, and an early adopter of that code's 2017 edition."
  - That same report noted that Efficiency Canada's recent Canadian Energy Efficiency Policy Scorecard ranks Nova Scotia third of all provinces on energy efficiency. That assessment confirmed that the province leads the country in energy-efficiency programs but notes that other provincial governments quickly catching up to Nova Scotia and are poised to surpass us because they are doing more to create efficient buildings, transportation, and enabling policy frameworks.

## CONTACT:

---

Kimberley Fry, Energy Efficiency Coordinator

Email: [kimberley.fry@ecologyaction.ca](mailto:kimberley.fry@ecologyaction.ca)