

Motion to support the decision of the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) to end the Natural Gas Pipeline subsidy and to ask the Ontario Government to allow the decision to stand

Moved by: Councillor Leahy

Seconded by: Councillor Foster

WHEREAS: Residents are struggling with energy bill increases and need relief;

AND WHEREAS: Natural gas is no longer the cheapest way to heat homes because electric heat pumps are now much more efficient, can provide all heating needs even in the cold climates, and result in far lower energy bills compared to gas heating;

AND WHEREAS: Natural gas is methane gas, which is a fossil fuel that causes approximately one-third of Ontario's GHG emissions, and must be phased out because it is inconsistent with all climate targets, while heat pumps result in the lowest GHG emissions and are consistent with a zero-carbon future;

AND WHEREAS: The Ontario Energy Board ("OEB") decided to end a subsidy for methane gas pipelines to be built in new construction developments, effective 2025, finding that this would lower energy bills for existing gas customers and improve affordability for new homebuyers, but this decision is at risk of being overturned by the provincial government;

AND WHEREAS: The OEB decision will help lower energy bills and encourage heating systems that are consistent with climate targets and plans;

AND WHEREAS: The construction of new methane gas pipelines, which have 60-year lifetimes, should not be subsidized because they are inconsistent with the The Regional Municipality of Durham's climate targets and will result in higher carbon emissions, higher energy bills, higher future decarbonization retrofit costs to get off fossil fuel heating, and a continued financial drain as dollars leave the province to pay for fossil fuels extracted in other jurisdictions.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. THAT the Council of The Regional Municipality of Durham expresses its support for the decision of the Ontario Energy Board to end the gas pipeline subsidy and ask the Ontario Government to allow the decision to stand.

2. THAT this resolution be circulated to Premier Doug Ford; the Minister of Energy, Todd Smith; the Minister of Finance, Peter Bethlenfalvy; the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Paul Calandra; the Associate Minister of Housing, Rob Flack; President of AMO, Colin Best, and all local Ontario municipalities requesting support of the proposed changes.