



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-00492**

BY: **MR. THERIAULT (MONTCALM)**

DATE: **JUNE 14, 2016**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONOURABLE JIM CARR, P.C., M.P.**

Response by the Minister of Natural Resources

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Protection of the environment

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government of Canada would like to thank the petitioners for their submission on the proposed Energy East project.

The Government understands the importance of our natural resources to our economy and to the livelihoods of Canadians. It is a core responsibility of the federal government to help get our natural resources to market, but our resources must be developed and transported in a sustainable manner that protects our rich natural environment, respects the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and supports a more resilient natural resources sector.

In January, as part of our interim approach to major projects already under review, we announced plans to appoint temporary members to the National Energy Board (NEB) to carry out community and public engagement in relation to the proposed Energy East project. This summer, a competitive process was launched to identify qualified candidates from which these temporary members would be appointed.

On September 9, 2016, three panelists recused themselves from the NEB's Energy East review panel. Given this, following the completion of the competitive process noted above, the Government will appoint a number of new temporary members to the NEB. The NEB will then determine the work and duties for these temporary members which could include assigning them to the panel to review the proposed Energy East Pipeline project, or to supporting public and community engagement related to the Energy East Pipeline that would occur outside the formal Board hearings, or

to another project panel. The NEB has adjourned the Energy East hearings until these new temporary members are in place and they have determined how to advance the review.

Without public confidence in the regulatory process, proposed projects will not move forward. This is why on June 20, 2016, the Government of Canada launched a comprehensive review of environmental and regulatory processes. This review will focus on rebuilding trust in environmental assessment processes, explore the various ways in which the National Energy Board (NEB) can be modernized, and restore lost protections and introduce modern safeguards to the *Fisheries Act* and the *Navigation Protection Act*. Similarly, the interim approach announced in January by the Government for projects currently under review is enhancing our engagement with Indigenous Peoples, providing opportunities for Canadians to express their views, assessing the direct and upstream greenhouse gas emissions linked to projects, and ensuring the decisions are based on science and facts.

The Government of Quebec is also conducting a review of the Energy East project. The *Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement* has already begun public hearings on the Quebec portion of the project and is providing interested parties an opportunity to express their views on the project.

We are committed to restoring public confidence in the review processes relating to energy infrastructure, and will put in place a system that protects Canada's rich natural environment, respects the rights of Indigenous Peoples, enables public participation and supports a resilient Canadian natural resources sector.