

March 4, 2009

Common Sense Prevails as Essex Rejects Anti-Wind Moratorium

Green Energy Act Alliance applauds Essex Councillors for supporting green energy

Toronto - Environmental groups, unions, farmers and industry associations applauded the Town of Essex today for rejecting a moratorium on green energy development.

The Green Energy Act Alliance is pleased that Essex rejected a proposed moratorium Monday that would have stalled efforts to build green energy projects in the region. The moratorium would have placed a freeze on wind turbine projects while awaiting the results of provincial studies in addition to those already required for noise, safety and public health.

"This was an absurd proposal. Such a ban would signal to the renewable energy industry that Ontario is not ready for their investment and would act as a barrier to restoring economic prosperity to the region," said Dr. Rick Smith, Executive Director of Environmental Defence. "Now we can get back to the business of cleaning the environment and attracting good, green jobs to Essex."

Essex Town Councillors introduced the moratorium based on concerns from a small group of residents, but insufficient evidence was given during the debate over the moratorium to support such restrictions.

"The decision of the Essex town council shows the rest of the county and the province that renewable sources of energy will be an important part of our future - a future that must be environmentally and economically sustainable," said Derek Coronado, Coordinator, Citizens Environment Alliance of southwestern Ontario.

As part of a province-wide strategy to attract green jobs and fulfill Ontario's commitment to fight climate change, Minister of Energy and Infrastructure George Smitherman introduced the landmark Green Energy Act that will encourage investment in renewable energy in the province, making Ontario a leader in renewable energy and spurring the creation of new green jobs.

"Ontario needs to start building green energy projects with Canadian-made products now. Slowing down green energy in this province will delay or prevent new good permanent jobs from coming here," said Ken Neumann, United Steelworkers National Director for Canada. "We need to think of the future of Ontario - for jobs, for energy and for our children."

The Green Energy Act Alliance's recommendations for an effective Green Energy Act can be found online at www.greenenergyact.ca

About the Green Energy Act Alliance (www.greenenergyact.ca): The Alliance's vision is to make Ontario a global leader in green energy development through the use of renewable energy, distributed energy and conservation, creating thousands of jobs, economic prosperity, energy security, while ensuring climate protection. Founding groups include: the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association, Community

Power Fund, the David Suzuki Foundation, Environmental Defence, the First Nations Energy Alliance, the Ivey Foundation, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Pembina Institute.

-30-

For more information or to arrange interviews, please contact:

Jennifer Foulds, Environmental Defence, (416) 323-9521 ext.232; (647) 280-9521 (cell)
Derek Coronado, Citizens Environment Alliance of southwestern Ontario, 519-973-1116