



Media Release

Green Energy Act the Solution to Environmental and Economic Crises is theme of North Bay Meeting

(North Bay ON., Feb 14, 2009)- Citizens from North Bay and surrounding area attended a workshop at Nipissing University today (February 14), organized by the Innovation Initiatives Ontario North (IION) and the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association (OSEA). The presentation was a preview of what these organizations anticipated seeing in the Green Energy Act, which Premier Dalton McGuinty announced on February 3, will be tabled later in the month.

The theme of the afternoon was quickly established by the opening comments, “A Green Energy Act will bring economic prosperity and new ‘green’ jobs to Ontario, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and allow individuals, communities and companies to become energy producers and conservers,” made by Kristopher Stevens, executive director of OSEA, a founding member of the Green Energy Act Alliance (GEAA).

Renewable energy is the solution to both climate change and the economic crisis but to get enough windmills erected, solar panels installed and biodigesters operating, legislation is needed to make renewable energy a provincial priority.

Stevens went on to say, “The fundamental components we expect to see in Ontario’s Green Energy Act flow from similar legislation adopted in Germany. That country is now a world leader able to produce 20,000 MW of new green power, developed in less time than it would take to build a 1,000 MW nuclear plant. Germany is also able to meet tough climate change targets by avoiding the emission of 100 million tonnes of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere a year, while a quarter of a million new green collar jobs have been created, all for just an extra \$5 a month per household.

The GEAA is recommending guaranteed access to the electricity grid for all producers of sustainable energy, priority purchase of green electricity before coal and nuclear power, fair prices, fixed over the long term for renewables and a strong commitment to continually improve conservation and efficiency.

Across Ontario, farmers, First Nations and communities are eager to contribute to the province’s electricity supply by producing clean, renewable energy. However, they are being hindered by outdated regulations that slow the adoption of renewable energy technology, a lack of access to the grid to sell their energy and opposition from lobbyists for the coal and nuclear power industry.

“Ontario’s Green Energy Act is another indication of this province's strong commitment to nurture innovation, thereby continuing to accelerate the diversification of our economy”, said Robert Deline, executive director of Innovation Initiatives Ontario North. “With the implementation of this Act, Ontario will move quickly toward becoming the ‘top of the class’ in renewable energy, helping to create thousands of new knowledge based jobs, and also in fostering ever greater energy self sufficiency,”

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A schedule of all the GEAA workshops in this provincial series can be found at http://www.greenenergyact.ca/Storage/23/1476_Handout_v2_revised.pdf

OSEA works to initiate, facilitate and support the work of local sustainable energy organizations through membership services, province wide capacity building and non-partisan policy work. They work to catalyze the efforts of community organizers and raise awareness of the benefits of community power and renewable energy through various communication channels and by offering a variety of workshops and guidebooks on topics.

Innovation Initiatives Ontario North's primary goal is the diversification of the Northern Ontario economy. This objective will be met through the facilitation of partnerships between industry and educational institutions as well as between industries whose synergies may not have been as apparent in the past.