

Power to the People **Green Energy Act a step towards the conserver society**

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Ontario's new Green Energy Act will help people across Ontario become more actively involved in the de-centralized production of green power and it will help them save money on their energy bills.

"It's power to the people" says Chris Winter, the Executive Director of the Conservation Council of Ontario. "Right on!"

For the first time since the first energy crisis in the early 1970's, Ontario is shifting the emphasis from centralized mega-projects to community and green power projects. "We are finally seeing the transition to the Conserver Society model first proposed over thirty-five years ago", Winter observed.

The Conservation Council of Ontario welcomes the provisions in the Green Energy Act for streamlined approvals and guaranteed access to the grid for renewable power, strengthening the Building Code, improving conservation support programs, and requiring municipal conservation plans. These are the kinds of provincial tools that support the work the Council is already doing to build a united voluntary conservation movement across Ontario.

Indeed, Winter notes that the Green Energy Act reinforces the need for a strong voluntary sector and small business role in promoting conservation and green power. "Green energy and conservation is all about local jobs and services," he said. "Now more than ever we need to help shift Ontario to more local economies that are more resilient, efficient, and healthier. "

"Let's be realistic", Winter said. "We are still a long way from the solar age and conserver society, and over the next few years we will still be facing the prospect of expensive and polluting mega-projects. But the Green Energy Act has given us a new suite of tools to promote conservation and renewable power, and it is a strong signal that Ontario is moving towards an efficient energy system, with an emphasis on distributed generation, renewable power, and conservation."

Winter praised the Premier for his strong stand on renewable power and progress on the coal phaseout, and the Deputy Premier, Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, George Smitherman, who appears to be on a mission to make Ontario the North American the clear leader in renewable power and conservation.

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The Conservation Council of Ontario is a provincial association of organizations and conservation leaders working to facilitate the transition to a conserver society and a conserver economy in Ontario. Visit www.weconserve.ca for more information.