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Charitable Registration
Number 11924 8771 RR0001

October 15, 2003

To: **The Honourable Dalton McGuinty**
Premier-Designate of Ontario

Dear Premier-Designate McGuinty:

Re: Phasing Out Coal Fired Power Plants

I am writing to you on behalf of the Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA), a non-profit, volunteer organization that represents many of the staff working in public health units and community health centres across this province. Our members include the nurses, toxicologists, health promoters, epidemiologists, environmental health managers, public health inspectors and policy analysts responsible for maintaining and improving public health in their communities.

I am writing to tell you that our organization supports the strong stand that your party has taken on the issue of coal-fired power plants in this province. In November 2002, the OPHA published a report entitled, "[Beyond Coal: Power, Public Health and the Environment](#)", in which we called for the phase-out of coal-fired power plants because of their significant release of sulphur oxides, nitrogen oxides, mercury and greenhouse gases that contribute to toxic air pollution, smog, acid rain, contamination of the food supply, and global climate change.

In this report, which drew on advice from staff from seven different public health units in southern Ontario, we also indicated that the phase-out of coal-fired power plants should not be accomplished with greater reliance on nuclear plants. The Project Advisory Committee was united in its belief that nuclear energy was an expensive option that presents significant health, safety and security issues for workers, the public and the environment. Instead the OPHA has recommended that the 37,000 GWh of electricity generated with coal in 2001, be displaced with increases in energy efficiency, replaced in the short- to medium-term with high efficiency natural gas generators, and replaced in the long-term with renewable energy supplies. Energy experts TorrieSmith Associates have estimated that investments in energy efficiency could reduce demand by 35,000 GWh, industrial and commercial co-generation could provide an additional 10,000 GWh of electricity, and generation with wind, small hydro and biogas projects could add 5,000 GWh of electricity to the grid by 2012.

With some reliance on high efficiency natural gas generators, we believe that it is possible to push this date forward to meet a more ambitious timetable.

We do not believe that this agenda needs to cost the provincial government large amounts of money. We believe that the provincial government can promote huge improvements in energy efficiency by ensuring, through the Ontario Energy Board, that electric utilities can profit from energy efficiency programs that reduce electricity consumption and customers' bills. We also believe that development of renewable energy supplies can be encouraged with the establishment of a Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. Jack Lee
Executive Director

cc. Don Guy, Office of the Premier-Designate
Gerald Butts, Office of the Premier-Designate
David MacNaughton, Office of the Premier-Designate
Matt Maychak, Office of the Premier-Designate
Connie Uetrecht, President, Ontario Public Health Association
Kim Perrotta, OPHA Air Quality Coordinator