

Ministry of Energy

77 Grenville St., 10<sup>th</sup> Floor

Toronto, ON, M7A 2C1

**RE: ERO 019-4926 Supporting Critical Transmission Infrastructure in Southwestern Ontario**

The Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers (OGVG) are pleased to provide commentary to the Ministry of Energy regarding the recently announced prioritization of key transmission projects in the Southwest. OGVG represents over 200 greenhouse vegetable producers that account for more than 3,500 acres of fresh, nutritious tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers grown annually. Generating farmgate sales exceeding \$1 Billion in both 2019 and 2020, the greenhouse vegetable sector is prepared to grow further at a rate of 5% per year over the next 5 years.

The implementation of technology, such as robotics, artificial intelligence applications, and highly advanced lighting systems are making greenhouse vegetable farms state-of-the-art production facilities. Employing over 18, 000 individuals, we anticipate thousands more career and upskilling opportunities in the next 5 years. The announced transmission projects designated priority, are essential to the development of the greenhouse vegetable sector in Southwestern Ontario, including the:

- 1) The Chatham to Lakeshore Line (230 kV)
- 2) The St. Clair Line (230 kV)
- 3) The Longwoods to Lakeshore Line (500 kV)

In addition to the above transmission lines, we are in support of Hydro One acting as transmitter for these projects, as well as the work required to begin development on:

- 1) A second 500 kV transmission line from the Longwoods to Lakeshore Transformer Station
- 2) A 230 kV transmission line from Windsor to Lakeshore Transformer Station

The Windsor-Essex region is positioned to lead the Province of Ontario in a post-COVID-19 economic recovery. The power these projects are going to deliver will prevent brown outs, minimize the impacts currently felt by an over-subscribed grid, and allow businesses across many sectors to expand and flourish. For the greenhouse sector, the load profiles currently modeled have baseloads much lesser than what the requirements will be in the next 3 years. Winter vegetable production is increasing due to the affordability and efficiency of lighting techniques, specifically Light Emitting Diode (LED) and High-Pressure Sodium (HPS). Enabling expansion and execution of transmission projects like the ones announced will reinforce our abilities to grow, package and make available sustainably grown, nutritious and affordable food for Ontario.

We look forward to working together further with the provincial government, as well as the Ministry of Energy, and are excited to continue to identify clean energy projects that will reduce emissions, improve efficiencies, and help our communities grow.

Sincerely,

Aaron Coristine

Manager of Science, Government and Regulatory Affairs

The Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers