



Conservation Council of New Brunswick
Conseil de conservation *du* Nouveau-Brunswick

Hon. Mike Holland
Minister of Natural Resources and Energy Development
Hugh John Flemming Forestry Centre, P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB, E3B 5H1

July 21, 2021

Submitted via email to Mike.Holland@gnb.ca

RE: *Building an affordable, renewable and reliable electricity system in N.B.*

Dear Minister Holland,

We are writing to you today to ask that you commit New Brunswick to building a modern electricity system that is affordable, environmentally sustainable and reliable.

We rely too heavily in New Brunswick on dirty fossil fuels like coal, oil, and gas, as well as nuclear to generate our electricity. These fuels create pollution that make the climate extreme, and produce dangerous radioactive waste we must safely store for thousands of years. There are better ways to make electricity. We want pollution-free electricity to power our lives.

A pollution-free electricity system that is affordable and reliable makes electricity from cost-effective renewable technologies like wind, solar and storage technologies. We can build renewable technology projects in just a few months or a couple of years, compared to more than a decade for untried and dangerous technologies like small modular nuclear reactors. We have no time to waste.

Climate change is upon us and we have less than 10 years to stop burning coal, oil and fossil gas to power electricity and transportation if we are going to prevent even more dangerous climate change. We need to invest first in a mix of smaller and larger renewable energy projects in New Brunswick so we can close all fossil plants before 2030. As we build our own non-polluting electricity system, we also need to retrofit buildings so we use electricity efficiently. We need to ensure low-income households get the support they need to use less energy and shift to electric transportation. We need to connect regionally to balance the Atlantic power system.

An energy efficient, renewable and interconnected electricity system can deliver affordable, environmentally sustainable and reliable electricity to power our lives. Investments, in partnership with the federal government and communities, will create jobs over the next 10 years, modernize our economy and make us more resilient to extreme weather events like floods, ice storms and tropical storms.

How do we create a non-polluting electricity system to power our lives? Here is what we need:

1. A strategic plan to phase out fossil fuels from our electricity system and to power more of our transportation and industry with electricity from renewable energy like solar, wind and storage technologies. We need a public process to develop this plan.
2. Electricity reform to ensure the *Electricity Act* and government policies and regulation remove barriers to building a non-polluting electricity system. We need reform so we can consider social and environmental costs, not just financial costs when making electricity decisions. That is not the case today. Government policy would regulate a renewable energy target for the province of at least 80 to 90 per cent by 2030 (not emissions-free).

We look forward to meeting with you and to your positive response and to positively engaging with your Government on the important question of electricity reform in New Brunswick and the Atlantic Region.

Respectfully,



Lois Corbett
Executive Director



Louise Comeau
Director Climate Change and Energy Solutions