

Date: April 23, 2018

The Honourable Jim Carr, Minister of Natural Resources, delivers opening keynote address at the Positive Energy Forum at the University of Ottawa.

Thank you Monica and good afternoon everyone.

It's great to be back for another round of Positive Energy. Congratulations to Monica and her team for organizing this important and timely conference.

I want to acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the Algonquin people.

That's significant for two reasons today.

First, such acknowledgements remind us that this nation's first people were also this land's first protectors.

An Indigenous proverb says, "We do not inherit this land from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children."

I would say we do both. *(Seven generations looking in each direction)*

Second, the Algonquin connection reminds us of our earliest roots as a trading nation.

The city of Ottawa takes its name from the Algonquin word for “trade” — a nod to the days when the nearby shores of the Ottawa River were a place for Indigenous people to meet and barter.

All of this goes to the heart of our Government’s own vision for Canada in this clean-growth century: a vision built on economic prosperity, environmental protection and Indigenous partnerships.

Canada is well positioned to realize that vision and lead the global transition to a low-carbon economy: with our abundance of natural resources. Our experience and know-how in developing them. And our history as free traders.

But first we have to restore public confidence. That’s why I opened by saying this conference is both important and timely.

Public Confidence in Energy Decision-Making is not just a well-chosen theme or a compelling research topic. It’s critical to our future. To rallying Canadians in common cause. And shared purpose.

Unfortunately, as Monica's opinion research has found, Canadians' confidence in the country's energy system has slipped. There are still those who think we have to sacrifice the economy to protect the environment, or vice versa.

We set about to show Canadians that the economy and the environment are mutually reinforcing objectives.

Less than three months into our mandate, we introduced an interim set of principles for reviewing major resource projects. An approach aimed at maintaining investor certainty, expanding public consultations and enhancing Indigenous engagement.

Next, we went to work with the provinces and territories, and in consultation with Indigenous peoples, to develop a national plan that drives economic growth as we combat a changing climate

The Pan Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change is that plan — an ambitious blueprint to create good jobs and meet our international commitments in the Paris Agreement.

In lock step with that, we also announced the single-largest investment in Canada's oceans in our country's history. A \$1.5 billion Oceans Protection Plan that protects our coasts, makes navigation safer and strengthens our capacity to respond in the unlikely event of an oil spill.

And we didn't stop there.

We launched Generation Energy, Canada's largest national discussion on energy. We invited Canadians to imagine our energy future and they responded. By the hundreds of thousands. And hundreds more travelled to my home city of Winnipeg for a two-day Generation Energy forum last fall.

Monica was there. As our emcee. She saw it.

Suddenly, people who may never have spoken to each other before were now in the same room — challenging each other, and themselves.

And at the end of the two days, when I delivered my wrap-up remarks, I asked people in the audience to put up their hands if they

had experienced a moment of discomfort during the discussions. Almost every hand went up.

Years from now, Canadians may very well look back and say Generation Energy was a turning point. That it marked our emergence as a clean-growth leader.

We're now taking that optimism to create a Canadian Energy Strategy, one that articulates a federal vision — in concert with the provinces and territories and the good work they'd done prior to our taking office.

Things such as:

- Leveraging the fossil fuel resources we have today to deliver clean-energy solutions for tomorrow.
- Advancing shared priorities to use more renewables and promote energy efficiency.
- And linking those provinces who have an abundance of clean electricity with those who are trying to get there.

All of these things I've just talked about are captured in the spirit of Bill C-69, which strengthens the way environmental assessments and regulatory reviews are carried out. With better rules to restore public trust, advance Indigenous reconciliation, protect our environment and encourage new investments.

A new approach that starts with two key changes.

First, we are establishing a new federal agency — the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada — to replace the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency.

This new Agency will work in partnership with federal regulators to deliver a single, consistent and predictable assessment process for designated projects and coordinate consultations with Indigenous peoples.

It will look at how a project could affect not just our environment, but also communities and health, Indigenous peoples, jobs and the economy over the long term.

And second, we are creating a new federal energy regulator to replace the National Energy Board.

A modern regulator updated to reflect Canada's changing energy needs and an expanded mandate to review traditional and renewable sources of energy — including offshore wind.

It will have the independence and accountability to oversee a strong, safe and sustainable Canadian energy sector for the 21st Century. One better equipped to deal with shifting global energy markets, the evolving legal landscape for Indigenous rights, and the new technology that creates unprecedented opportunities for public consultations and transparency.

In short, a regulator Canadians can have confidence in.

Now, you may be thinking, "That all sounds fine, but what about the Trans Mountain Expansion pipeline? Doesn't it show that no matter what you do to restore trust in the process, there will still be opponents of energy projects?"

To which I'd say, "You're absolutely right."

Even the best processes, driven by facts and evidence and the widest possible public consultations, cannot guarantee that everybody will agree with the results of that process.

But at least everyone should be able to agree that the process itself was fair and open, and balanced and based on the best evidence.

That's what restoring public confidence is all about.

Canadians are reasonable people. They're fair people. And they want and deserve a process that is reasonable and fair too.

Our Government has tried to create that process.

Does it ensure unanimity? Of course not. At the end of the day, good people will disagree about the outcome. That's fine. Because that's where the Government of Canada's responsibility comes in — making difficult decisions that are in the national interest.

That's what I believe we have done.

By approving a pipeline that is good for Canada because of the jobs it will create, the better prices we will be able to get for our oil, and the increased government revenues that will follow — all while

dramatically enhancing environmental protections and Indigenous participation.

We stand by that decision. We are determined to see the pipeline built. And we are prepared to be held accountable by Canadians the next time we go to the polls. In free and democratic countries like ours, that is the ultimate expression of public confidence.

There's still plenty of work to be done. More trust to be earned. I expect some of the speakers at this conference to offer suggestions. I welcome them.

But we are headed in the right direction.

Restoring public confidence in energy decision-making.

Building a country where good projects get built in a responsible, timely and transparent way.

Creating good jobs and a stronger middle class.

A Canada that rises to the challenges of our times by creating the inclusive prosperity we all want while protecting the planet we all cherish, for generations to come.

That is our challenge. That is our responsibility.

Thank you.

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