



August 10, 2023

Honourable Danielle Smith
Premier and President of Executive Council
Office of the Premier
Executive Branch
307 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6
premier@gov.ab.ca

RE: RENEWABLES MORATORIUM

Dear Premier Smith,

I am writing today, on behalf of the 175,000 Alberta workers represented by unions affiliated with the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL), to urge you in the strongest possible terms to rescind your government's ill-advised moratorium on renewable energy projects.

A recent report from the Calgary-based Canadian Energy Regulator (CER) [\[LINK\]](#) concluded that demand for oil produced in Alberta will likely collapse in coming years as the world scrambles to address climate change.

We think our governments and political leaders, at all levels, owe a duty to the workers of this province to think deeply about the change that is rapidly unfolding around us and plan for it.

In particular, we think that you and all the other people elected to the Legislative Assembly need to answer the following urgent question: in an oil and gas



producing jurisdiction like ours, where will our future jobs and prosperity come from as the world accelerates the process of moving away from fossil fuels?

Over the past two or three years, the AFL and a coalition of unions representing Albertans working in construction, manufacturing and oil and gas have come to the conclusion that a big part of the solution is to grow investment and job creation in the renewable energy sector.

Our report, *Skate to Where the Puck is Going*, [\[LINK\]](#) outlines opportunities in this important sector, along with opportunities for investment in other sectors, including the oil and gas sector itself.

What we're proposing is similar to what the Biden Administration is currently doing south of the border: using government-led industrial policy to pivot the American economy towards new paths for prosperity in a changing world.

As I'm sure you know, the Biden Administration's approach has been a huge success [\[LINK\]](#), creating thousands and thousands of jobs and leveraging hundreds of billions of dollars in investment. How can we justify not following suit?

We at the AFL agree with the many other Albertans – from business, labour and civil society – who believe that your government's moratorium sends the wrong message and moves our province entirely in the wrong direction.

Instead of providing certainty for investors, it does the opposite. Instead of creating jobs, it jeopardizes them. Instead of preparing us for the future, it sets us back and increases the risk that our province will fall behind as the world moves forward.

Yes, there are important issues that need to be addressed as the renewable energy sector grows. For example, we need to figure out how to address concerns about land use, site reclamation and system reliability. And, as our affiliate, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 424, recently pointed out in a letter to you, we should also be talking about safety, wages and training in the renewable energy sector.

These are all important conversations. However, as University of Calgary energy law experts Nigel Bankes and Martin Olszynski explained in a recent blog [[LINK](#)], all of these issues could have been addressed without a moratorium.

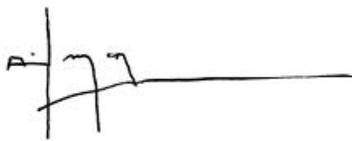
Frankly, we're worried that your government's actions with this moratorium run the risk of undermining a thriving home-grown industry, killing jobs and turning our province into an investment pariah. And for what, so you can satisfy members of your political base who don't want to admit that change is coming, whether we like it or not?

With all due respect, a province of four million people can't hold back the tides of global change. Either we prepare for that change or we'll get run over by it.

With all of this in mind, I reiterate our call for you to rescind the moratorium. Let the consultations proceed – but hold them alongside development, not in the absence of development. And when you do consult, please include Alberta workers and the Alberta unions that represent them. The future belongs to all of us, not just those who your government favours. We demand a say and a seat at the table, too.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our views and our suggestions. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss these issues in greater detail (and, yes, please consider that another formal request for a meeting).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gil McGowan', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Gil McGowan

President

Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL)

