

For Immediate Release

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Polls Show Overwhelming Support for Ontario *Green Energy Act*

New poll shows strong support for Green Energy Act and renewable energy across the province, including in areas where wind power has seemed controversial

Toronto – A vast majority of Ontarians support Ontario's proposed *Green Energy Act*, according to a public opinion poll released today by a coalition of environmental groups, farmers, labour unions, and industry associations. Eighty seven per cent (87%) of respondents said they support the proposed *Green Energy Act*. The poll shows support is widespread across the province, with the highest support in Northern Ontario (93%), Toronto (89%), and the GTA/905 (88%)

“It’s not surprising that a majority of Ontario would support the Green Energy Act. It puts Ontarians ahead of the game in protecting the environment and investing in the green economy,” said Deb Doncaster, Executive Director of the Community Power Fund. “What is surprising is how widespread the support is. In every region of Ontario there is strong support for the *Green Energy Act*.”

The poll also shows strong support in regions where proposed renewable energy projects are considered controversial. Both Scarborough and Essex County residents showed high levels of support for the *Green Energy Act*, 92 and 86 per cent respectively. Support in Scarborough was a full 4 per cent above the provincial average level of support for the Green Energy Act itself.

“News reports would have us believe that Scarborough is a hotbed of anti-wind sentiment, but the poll clearly shows that this is manufactured and exaggerated,” said Dr. Rick Smith, Executive Director of Environmental Defence. “Plans to test the offshore wind potential are supported by a majority of those living in Scarborough who want to see renewable energy in their city.”

Seventy-nine per cent (79%) of Scarborough residents support Toronto Hydro's plan to put a wind measuring device off the Scarborough shore, while 84 per cent of Essex County residents support plans to build wind farms there.

“What we’re seeing in Essex County and Scarborough is not only strong support for the Green Energy Act, but strong support for local wind energy initiatives,” said Dan Arnold of Pollara.

Ontarians who took part in the poll see the main long-term benefits of the Act as a reduction in Ontario's greenhouse gas emissions (36%) and the creation of green jobs (19%). Over three quarters of respondents (78%) believe that the Green Energy Act will have a positive impact on Ontario's job market.

Ontarians are also willing to invest in green energy themselves. Twenty six per cent (26%) said they would be very likely to invest in solar panels on their own roof, 21 per cent said they would be very likely to invest in local wind farms and 18 per cent said they would be very likely to invest in local solar projects.

Pollara conducted a telephone survey of Ontarians on the Green Energy Act between March 13 and April 9, 2009. In total, 1,203 interviews were completed, resulting in an overall margin of

error of $\pm 2.8\%$, 19 times out of 20. During this same time period, two additional telephone surveys were conducted in Essex County and Scarborough, of sample sizes 301 and 305, respectively. They each carry a margin of error of $\pm 5.6\%$, 19 times out of 20.

The poll results are available on the Green Energy Act web site at **www.greenenergyact.ca**.

About the Green Energy Act Alliance: The Alliance's vision is to make Ontario a global leader in green energy development through the use of renewable energy, distributed energy and conservation, creating thousands of jobs, economic prosperity, energy security, while ensuring climate protection. Founding groups include: the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association, Community Power Fund, the David Suzuki Foundation, Environmental Defence, the First Nations Energy Alliance, the Ivey Foundation, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Pembina Institute. www.greenenergyact.ca

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