



October 21, 2011

Via email: Minister@ec.gc.ca

The Honourable Peter Kent, P.C., M.P.
Minister of the Environment
Les Terrasses de la Chaudière
10 Wellington Street, 28th Floor
Gatineau, QC K1A 0H3

Dear Minister:

Re: Climate Change

On behalf of the Canadian Bar Association (CBA), I am writing to encourage your government to prioritize work to ensure problems in relation to climate change are addressed.

Climate change is a serious problem that has profound economic and environmental implications for Canada's future. In February 2007, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported that changes in the atmosphere, oceans, glaciers and ice caps show unequivocally that the world is warming due to human activities. Consequences of climate change include the melting of polar ice sheets, species loss, rising ocean levels and increased storm activity. Economic and human costs of climate change are being felt most sharply in Canada's Arctic, where an increase in average temperatures is already putting Canadians at risk. Climate change has been identified by the American CIA as a risk to global security. It also poses risks to human health.

The CBA is a national association representing approximately 37,000 jurists, including lawyers, notaries, law teachers and students, across Canada. Our primary objectives are to uphold the Rule of Law, improve the administration of justice, and promote equality in the law. Risks to Canadians' health and safety have negative implications for the maintenance of peace and order in Canada, and threaten the Rule of Law. The American Pentagon has established an office to examine ways climate change is a threat to global security. This Centre for the Study of Climate Change has projected future climate and security scenarios that implicate Canada's Rule of Law including potential conflict over a thawed northwest passage, a potentially massive influx of refugees on Canadian shores, as well as threats to air and land transportation routes due to increased storm activity.

In August 2011, the CBA's governing Council passed the enclosed resolution enjoining Canada's governments to act swiftly to establish a national climate change strategy to help secure Canada's environmental and economic future. The CBA asks that your government work with provincial and territorial governments to develop and implement comprehensive national climate regulations that include mandatory greenhouse gas emission reductions as well as carbon pricing.

We urge you to undertake a review of policies and legislation to ensure Canada does better to address climate change issues. The National Environmental, Energy and Resources Law Section (NEERLS) of the CBA is comprised of lawyers who deal in depth with matters of legal reform, legal education and management relating to the environment, energy and natural resources. Members from NEERLS would be most pleased to assist you in the review.

Yours truly,

(original signed by Trinda L. Ernst)

Trinda L. Ernst, Q.C.

Encl.

Climate Change

WHEREAS climate change and Canada's response to it have profound environmental and economic implications for Canada's future;

WHEREAS Canada needs a national climate strategy to help secure its environmental and economic future and permit it to prosper in a carbon-constrained global economy;

WHEREAS the current patchwork of federal, provincial and territorial climate targets, plans and policies has not resulted in an effective national climate strategy for Canada that appropriately reflects regional differences;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Canadian Bar Association urge the federal, provincial and territorial governments to take immediate action to work together to develop and implement comprehensive national climate regulations that include mandatory greenhouse gas emission reductions and carbon pricing.

Moved by National Environmental, Energy and Resources Law Section

Changement climatique

ATTENDU QUE le changement climatique et la réaction du Canada envers ce changement auront de profondes répercussions environnementales et économiques sur l'avenir du Canada;

ATTENDU QUE le Canada a besoin d'une stratégie nationale sur le climat afin d'assurer son avenir environnemental et économique et de lui permettre de prospérer au sein d'une économie mondiale qui disposera de ressources en carbone limitées;

ATTENDU QUE l'actuelle multiplicité des objectifs, politiques et plans d'action en matière de climat qui ont été établis par le gouvernement fédéral et les gouvernements provinciaux et territoriaux n'a pas permis au Canada de se doter d'une stratégie nationale sur le climat qui est efficace et qui tient dûment compte de différences régionales;

QU'IL SOIT RÉSOLU QUE l'Association du Barreau canadien exhorte le gouvernement fédéral et les gouvernements provinciaux et territoriaux à prendre immédiatement des mesures qui leur permettront de collaborer à l'élaboration et à la mise en vigueur de règlements nationaux exhaustifs sur le climat qui rendent obligatoires, entre autres, la réduction des émissions de gaz à effet de serre et la tarification du carbone.

Proposée par la Section nationale du droit de l'environnement, de l'énergie et des ressources