



Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H3

APR 07 2014

Mr. Robert Varney

Chair

Joint Public Advisory Committee

Commission for Environmental Cooperation

393 St-Jacques Street West, Suite 200

Montréal QC H2Y 1N9

Dear Mr. Varney:

On behalf of the Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), I would like to respond to the letter dated October 30, 2013, from the previous Chair of the Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC), Mr. David Angus. I regret the delay in responding.

The Council values the JPAC's views and appreciates its members' concerns regarding the issues raised in Mr. Angus' letter, namely the CEC's budget and its impact on public engagement, the possibility of holding an inter-sessional Council meeting and the attainment of full JPAC membership in support of public participation in the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC).

With respect to the current budgetary situation, the Council confirmed, through a resolution signed last July in Los Cabos, Mexico, that the CEC budget will be maintained at \$9 million per year over the next two years. The NAAEC Parties are committed to ensuring that the cooperative work program delivers high-impact results. To that effect, the \$1.2 million investment in community-level projects under the North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action is maintained and the Submissions on Enforcement Matters process remains robust and valuable to the public.

The Parties have provided guidance to the CEC Executive Director to maintain the CEC's annual budget at \$9 million by increasing administrative and operating efficiencies and drawing upon the organization's nearly \$2.5 million surplus.

The Council is confident that under the leadership of the Executive Director, the CEC will continue to identify efficiencies in its administrative processes, retool its human capital and find new ways to engage the public using technology and partnerships with organizations and enterprises throughout North America.

.../2

While the decision to reduce funding was not taken lightly, it was driven by fiscal adjustments and the Parties' shared commitment of equal contributions to funding the CEC. All Parties and the Secretariat will continue to seek efficiencies on an ongoing basis and invest in environmental priorities that fulfill the CEC's core mission of conserving, protecting and enhancing the North American environment.

With respect to JPAC membership, as you are aware, the US has recently announced its new members. Canada and Mexico are actively engaged in identifying new candidates.

Over the coming year, the three Parties, with the support of the JPAC and the Secretariat, will begin developing the 2015–2020 Strategic Plan along with a budget that conforms with prevailing financial realities. The Parties look forward to working cooperatively and productively with the JPAC on this initiative.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, P.C., M.P.  
Council Member for Canada

c.c.: Secretary Juan José Guerra, Council Member for Mexico  
Administrator Gina McCarthy, Council Member for the United States of America  
Mr. Dan McDougall, Alternate Representative for Canada  
Mr. Enrique Lendo, Alternate Representative for Mexico  
Ms. Jane Nishida, Alternate Representative for the United States  
Ms. Irasema Coronado, CEC Executive Director  
Ms. Marcela Orozco, JPAC Liaison Officer