

MEDIA ADVISORY

## **CLEAN TRAIN COALITION ADVOCATES CLEAN TRAINS METROLINX, MCGUINITY URGED TO "GO ELECTRIC"**

Toronto, July 30 - In its final submission to the Metrolinx Environmental Assessment, the Clean Train Coalition urged the Province of Ontario and Metrolinx to change the plans for rail expansion in Toronto and build electric, rather than diesel, infrastructure.

The Clean Train Coalition represents thousands of citizens through links to dozens of communities and community groups in Toronto. The Coalition was formed early this year when Metrolinx announced plans to run 464 diesel trains each day through densely populated sections of Toronto. Residents along this rail corridor have spoken at all the Metrolinx open houses and sent petitions to all three levels of government urging that this corridor be built right the first time.

Metrolinx today announced an end to the Environmental Assessment studying the effects of this project. It will now be up to the Minister of the Environment of Ontario, John Gerretsen, to have the last word.

"We believe the evidence in Metrolinx's Assessment proves that these trains cannot be run safely in Toronto," said Carina Cojeen, co-chair of the Coalition. "Most harmful pollutants will double, greenhouse gas emissions will increase. Such groups as the Toronto District School Board, the Toronto Board of Health, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, Toronto Environmental Alliance and others agree that this project will cause harm to an already poor and unhealthy part of Toronto. Children are especially at risk, with studies showing that children exposed to these levels of pollution have permanent damage to their lungs."

Metrolinx's plans include infrastructure to support a massive expansion in GO services to Bradford, Brampton and Milton, as well as a diesel express train run by a private company to Toronto Airport from Union Station. Despite Metrolinx's agreement that this line should be electrified, there are no plans to do so. The line runs by the homes of 300,000 citizens, as well as 76 schools, 96 daycares and 4 long-term care facilities.

"We believe that it is folly to spend a billion dollars on infrastructure to run last century's technology," said Cojeen. "No other government in the world would consider such a massive increase in diesel traffic in a dense urban area, and only Dhaka in Bangladesh runs diesel trains to its airport. Electric trains are faster, quieter, do not pollute, can stop in more places, and are more flexible than the current diesel technology. The cost to convert is affordable, and should be part of the plan."

The Clean Train Coalition has called upon Metrolinx and the Province to change focus from diesel to electric, and build it right the first time.

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For further information on The Clean Train coalition, please see [www.cleantrain.ca](http://www.cleantrain.ca).