

Saskatchewan Should Not Be “Next Decade” Country

The Provincial Government’s announcement today that it will reject a nuclear reactor in Saskatchewan without even fully researching the business case for its development, is disappointing to the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce. The organization would like to have seen all energy options remain open in Saskatchewan.

“No one energy source is going to provide our province with the long term supply needed. We have to have a mix of power resources of various scales,” explained Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce CEO Steve McLellan. “We are disappointed that one of the major methods of clean power generation is now going to be discarded before it was fully explored. Nuclear options were not researched as to cost and there was never a full proposal on the table. The government should be open to alternatives based on a sound business case. Changes related to infrastructure costs and greenhouse gas charges will significantly affect what is considered to be cost competitive in the future.”

Despite disappointment over the nuclear decision, the Chamber’s primary concern is to ensure that there is enough future power to keep the lights on in the homes and businesses of our province. Therefore, the Chamber is pleased that the government has charged Sask Power with the development of a provincial energy strategy, although concerned that they are not looking beyond 2020.

“For years, the Chamber has expressed concerns about Saskatchewan’s long-term energy future. This is an issue that needs to be addressed, especially as new large scale industrial developments are being planned,” continued McLellan.

The Chamber is supportive of the government’s clean coal efforts; however the organization recognizes that the success of this endeavor is by no means assured. Therefore, Sask Power needs to have alternative plans proposed in its strategy that draw upon a variety of resources.

The Saskatchewan Chamber believes the private sector has a key role to play in the provision of energy in Saskatchewan due to the massive capital investments needed. Saskatchewan needs \$12 billion worth of capital investment in its power supply over the next 10 years.

“Without significant private sector partnerships, the cost of this capital development will have to be completely generated through tax revenues and utilities rates,” added McLellan. “Sask Power has taken some initial steps to develop private sector partnerships and we look forward to seeing more of these in the future.”

“A stable, adequate and affordable energy supply will have a significant impact on Saskatchewan’s future economic development opportunities,” concluded McLellan.

The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce represents the interest of our members from throughout the province by advocating for expanded opportunities and regulatory simplification. The Chamber launched a Growth Strategy in October of 2007 to encourage and help facilitate strategic growth, it can be found at www.saskchamber.com.

-30-

Contact:

Steve McLellan, CEO - Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce
Cell: 306- 533-7686