August 2, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

The Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership (SLEP) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the “Alternative Analysis for the Straits Pipeline” report prepared for the State of Michigan regarding the Enbridge Line 5 pipeline.

SLEP is a private/public sector, community-based partnership that works to continually increase the economic activity by providing action, direction, and leadership to community-based economic development in Sarnia-Lambton. This comprises working closely with groups and partners including business, education, labour, First Nations, and local government to maintain a commercially attractive environment, foster new business creation and ensure that established firms remain and grow in the region.

Making up two of the key economic sectors in Sarnia-Lambton, SLEP represents the businesses, organizations, workforce, and infrastructure associated with the Sarnia-Lambton Petrochemical and Refining Complex and the Sarnia-Lambton Biohybrid Chemistry Cluster. These groups of companies represent three major refineries and more than 36 related facilities, directly employing over 4,900 people, while generating an additional 23,500 associated jobs.

To support the requirements of local industry, infrastructure is a significant positive enabler and determinant of economic performance, especially for the supply and transportation of raw materials. The Enbridge Line 5 pipeline represents a critical piece of infrastructure, as its supply of light sweet and light sour crude oil, synthetics, and NGL has safely and effectively provided local feedstock for over 60 years to local facilities. This includes being one of the main sources of feedstock for refineries and chemical facilities operated by companies such as Imperial Oil (ExxonMobile), Suncor, Shell, NOVA Chemicals, and Plains Midstream.

While the mandate of SLEP is to represent Sarnia-Lambton, we recognize that our community relies on the overall health of a highly-integrated and complex supply chain economic structure that includes Ontario, Michigan and the entire Great Lakes Region. Enbridge’s Line 5 pipeline provides a vital link throughout this region, as the safest, most reliable way to move energy to refineries in Sarnia-Lambton, Detroit and Toledo.
Furthermore, propane produced by fractionators in both Sarnia-Lambton and Michigan provides a vital source of energy for residents, businesses, and agricultural operations throughout Michigan. Lastly, the manufactured goods generated through the value-chain associated with Enbridge’s Line 5 pipeline represent an essential source of cross-border commerce between Ontario and Michigan.

If Line 5 were removed from service, the province of Ontario and state of Michigan would need to satisfy their energy needs from other markets through less efficient and less environmentally-friendly modes of transportation. The resulting loss of crude supply and propane on the state of Michigan amounts to the equivalent volume of gas to fill 120,000 passenger cars and light-duty vehicles per day, jet fuel to move 92 commercial planes or 18,500 passengers per day, and propane to heat 240,000 homes. The impacts on Ontario would be significantly more.

For the foreseeable future, fossil fuels will continue to be the dominant source of energy, and the backbone of many of the products we use day-to-day. With that, we believe Enbridge takes very seriously its commitment to safety and environmental protection. The company has a responsibility to operate their facilities and pipelines safely, while continuing to provide a vital service to the residents and economy of Sarnia-Lambton, Ontario, Michigan, and the Great Lakes Region.

Thank-you for your consideration,

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