



June 19, 2025

Mayor Andrea Matrosovs and Members of Council, Town of The Blue Mountains

By email: cgiles@thebluemountains.ca

Dear Mayor Matrosovs and Members of Council,

Re: Bill 5, Special Economic Zones and T.C.Energy's Pumped Storage Proposal

Climate Action Now Network (TBM) is writing to encourage our Council to re-affirm your leadership regarding T.C. Energy's proposed battery storage plant on the Niagara Escarpment in Meaford. Council's resolution from December 18, 2023 opposed **in principle**, T.C. Energy's proposed plant, by supporting a resolution from the Township of the Archipelago. Council supported the Township's resolution since the economic, ecological and community impacts of the plant are unknown. However, the Town of Meaford and the County of Grey subsequently provided TCE with provisional support for the project, contingent upon TCE conducting a thorough, independent Environmental Assessment.

In its wisdom, our Town Council has **not** joined with the Town of Meaford or our County Council to provide provisional support to this project, as the environmental, economic and community health impacts **are still unknown**.

In June, Ontario's Bill 5 (which has now received Royal Assent), provides for the identification of "Special Economic Zones". Once these zones are identified, trusted proponents can proceed to develop projects without taking into account the current environmental and health regulatory regime. We are very concerned that T.C. Energy's proposed project will be identified as a Special Economic Zone, and thus not required to adhere to any provincial or municipal legislation, regulations or local by-laws. This will negate the need for TCE to conduct a thorough, independent Environmental Impact Assessment.

While Bill 5 has become law, the regulations that set out the criteria to designate Special Economic Zones or Projects have not been promulgated. Nor have the criteria identifying trusted proponents or projects been established or regulated. We are concerned that T.C. Energy's project is identified within this "Special Economic Zone" designation and as such can bypass all Provincial and municipal laws, regulations and policies.

As a result, CANN continues to have serious concerns about the lack of environmental, science-based information on the impacts on our precious Escarpment, the surrounding ecosystem, Georgian Bay waters and fisheries, our drinking water and on our communities.

We ask that:

- Council communicate to the Province that the Town of The Blue Mountains requests that T.C.Energy's proposed battery storage project is **excluded** from designation as a Special Economic Zone under the regulations to be developed in Bill 5 – *Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025*; and that
- Council request Grey County Council and the Town of Meaford to request the Province to **exclude** T.C. Energy's proposed battery storage project from designation as a Special Economic Zone under the regulations to be developed in Bill 5 – *Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025*.

We look forward to your consideration of our request.

Respectfully yours,

Sally Leppard
Co-Lead

CANN! We are a volunteer group in Town of the Blue Mountains. Our goal is to reduce the carbon footprint of the area and work together towards a more sustainable community.