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January 25, 2011

J. Robert S. Prichard  
Chair, Metrolinx Board of Directors  
20 Bay Street, Suite 600  
Toronto, ON M5J 2W3  
[Robert.Prichard@metrolinx.com](mailto:Robert.Prichard@metrolinx.com)

Dear Mr. Prichard:

**Re: Electrification of the GO rail system**

I am writing to acknowledge completion of the important work resulting in the GO Electrification Study, and to support the recommendation found in the Metrolinx Board Report, GO Electrification Study:

*“That the Board adopt the recommendations ... to proceed with Option 3, the electrification of the combined Georgetown and Lakeshore rail corridors...”*

I understand that the Metrolinx Board of Directors will consider this matter at your meeting on Wednesday, January 26, 2011. I encourage you to adopt this recommendation and to proceed as soon as possible with Phase One and subsequent phases of the electrification of the Georgetown and Lakeshore rail corridors.

Electrification of the Georgetown and Lakeshore rail corridors, while proposed for primarily business reasons, will bring health benefits to the communities adjacent to these corridors. By undertaking this initiative, Metrolinx will also be making its own modest but real contribution to the overall collective effort to improve air quality for the broader population of Toronto.

Following through on the recommendation for electrification, Metrolinx can choose a course for commuter rail in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area that would contribute to:

- incremental reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and selected criteria air contaminants (i.e., nitrogen oxides and sulphur oxides);
- reduced on-road traffic congestion associated with an increase in the transit mode share;
- healthier lifestyles and improved health outcomes in new commuters who use active transportation (e.g., walking or bicycling) to travel to and from GO rail stations; and,

- elimination of local emissions of diesel exhaust, which contains several toxic chemicals that are found in ambient air at levels of health concern (e.g., acetaldehyde, acrolein, benzene, 1,3-butadiene)

To advance the benefits of electrification for both riders and adjacent communities, I encourage Metrolinx to work collaboratively with the appropriate Provincial ministries to explore a more expedited approach to electrification than proposed. Given the added service and health benefits that could occur with full electrification of the GO rail network, I also encourage Metrolinx to pursue the required approvals and funding to implement electrification of the GO rail system starting with the Georgetown and Lakeshore corridors as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. McKeown". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" and last name "McKeown" clearly legible.

Dr. David McKeown  
Medical Officer of Health

copies: Bruce McCuaig, President and CEO, Metrolinx ([Bruce.McCuaig@metrolinx.com](mailto:Bruce.McCuaig@metrolinx.com))  
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