

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Nov. 28, 2006

The Editor  
The Province

Michael Smyth's column in the Sunday Province may have left readers with a mistaken impression about B.C.'s comprehensive Environmental Assessment (EA) process and two proposals currently before it to generate electricity using a combination of biomass (wood waste) and coal.

Smyth is mistaken when he suggests that because those proposals are in the EA process, that they somehow have "government support." This is not the case.

The fact is, British Columbia needs increasing amounts of electricity because we are using more than we produce. And, while conservation is our first choice to address that reality, we also need to produce more electricity.

A lack of new capacity in the 1990s has left us dependent on imported power, much of it from the United States, for up to 12 to 15 per cent of our domestic needs.

Our 2002 Energy Plan called for 50 per cent of all new power to come from BC Clean sources. Since then, we have exceeded that target with numerous green power projects.

The EA process takes a number of factors into consideration including whether a project employs the best available technology. The EA process is open and transparent. I encourage anyone with an interest in these proposals to contribute to the consultation process.

Barry Penner  
Minister of Environment