



Environment, Energy
and Forestry

Environnement, Énergie
et Forêts



Office of the Minister

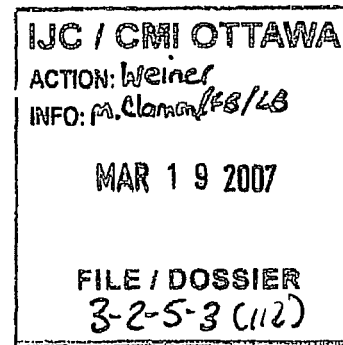
Charlottetown
Prince Edward Island
Canada

Bureau du ministre

Charlottetown
Île-du-Prince-Édouard
Canada

February 23, 2007

Murray Clamen
Secretary, International Joint Commission
Attention: Air Comments
234 Laurier Avenue West, 22nd Floor
Ottawa, ON K1P 6K6



Dear Mr. Clamen:

We reviewed, with interest, the 2006 Progress Report under the Canada-United States Air Quality Agreement and were immediately struck by both the quantity and quality of work undertaken over the past fifteen years. This unique arrangement has led to both parties achieving the reductions of sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides stipulated by the Agreement, and positioned them to do the same with respect to ground-level ozone and its precursor pollutants, NO_x and VOCs.

It is encouraging to see that, although there remains much work to be done, the parties are committed to moving ahead with new initiatives designed to further decrease emissions and the transboundary issues associated with them. There is no doubt that this relationship between Canada and the United States has been mutually beneficial, not only with respect to the specific tasks and goals of the Agreement, but also because of the productive collaboration between individuals on both sides of the border who share similar interests and passions.

Obviously, it is important to continue monitoring pollutants in the border area, as we can't assess progress without good data. It is equally important to refine our models so that we have some idea about the future impacts of anticipated reductions.

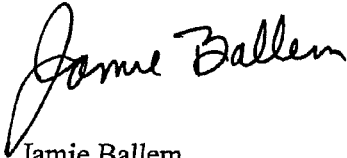
In recent years there has been a particular interest in the health issues associated with air contaminants. It is our hope that, along with continuing and vigorous monitoring and modelling, there will be a correspondingly robust focus on the health side. Given the number of mortalities associated with air pollution, the rise in childhood asthma, the increasing number of environmental allergies, and the resultant burden on our healthcare systems, we must always remain cognizant of the human impacts as we do our science and develop our policies.

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The Canada-U.S. Air Quality Committee is to be commended on their fine work, and encouraged to continue in the same fashion as they address the air issues of today and tomorrow.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie Ballem". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Jamie Ballem
Minister

/bk