

Local governments need a say on national energy strategy, says new report

VANCOUVER, B.C. – Local governments are well positioned to help develop and implement energy policy for Canada, says a report released today by the Columbia Institute.

Canada's Premiers have been holding discussions on a national energy strategy through the Council of the Federation. Canada's current approach to energy policy is primarily driven by individual provinces, but municipalities stand on the front lines facing rising public sector energy costs, community energy security questions, and local economic and environmental concerns, in addition to climate change related strain on local infrastructure

"Through infrastructure adaptation, repairs and related costs, municipalities will bear much of the financial brunt of climate change, which is linked directly to energy use. Municipalities control policy levers crucial to reducing energy consumption and increasing renewable energy use and production," said Charley Beresford, Executive Director of the Columbia Institute. "A role for municipalities in these discussions makes good policy sense."

Energy infrastructure and regulatory processes will be of key interest to local governments, says the report. A national energy strategy that reduces dependence on fossil fuels, and accelerates Canada's prosperity in the developing global clean energy economy, will benefit municipalities. Such a strategy would bring certainty to policy initiatives for all orders of government.

The Premiers charged with developing this strategy have stated that "the next state is to go out and consult Canadians on what their thoughts and ideas are for a Canadian energy strategy." Municipalities have needed expertise to bring to the table.

The Columbia Institute is a Canadian public policy institute.

The full report is available online at: www.civicgovernance.ca/canadian-energy-strategy

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