

**March 8, 2010**

**Letter to the Editor : CBC.ca**

**In response to the article entitled “Budget fails to protect environment, groups say” - March 5, 2010**

I would like to clarify for your readers the facts regarding the environmental review of large energy projects as outlined in Budget 2010.

The Government of Canada continues to be committed to protecting Canada’s environment. Budget 2010 initiatives are designed to reduce duplication by substituting the hearing processes of the National Energy Board (NEB) and Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) for those that would have been required under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, however the fundamentals of environmental assessment are not changing. The requirements of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* will continue to be met, including public participation and participant funding.

Only projects that undergo public hearings by the NEB and the CNSC are affected. This includes projects such as interprovincial and international pipelines and power lines and new nuclear plants. Oil sands projects are not affected by these changes.

This Government is committed to putting in place a regulatory regime that offers improved environmental protection, encourages investment by providing greater certainty to industry, and supports sustainable development and good environmental practices. We also want to ensure the timely and meaningful engagement of all Canadians, including the public, stakeholders and Aboriginal peoples.

The Honourable Jim Prentice, P.C., Q.C., M.P.  
Minister of the Environment