

OPENING STATEMENT BY MR. ATAMENENKO:

Well, thank you very much, Mr. Kelsey, Commissioners. I'd just like to first of all thank you for the opportunity to participate in these proceedings. I believe it's very important for the democratic process. I do have some notes here but I should warn you that I, much like I do in the House of Commons, I make last minute adjustments, so I'll be happy to provide them. If you can read my writing, we'll try to help you decipher them.

I'm a FortisBC customer, but I'm intervening as a Member of Parliament for B.C. Southern Interior to ensure that the many concerns that have been brought to my attention by my constituents, and I might add constituents in other areas of the province in regard to wireless smart meters, are recognized and carefully considered in this application. These concerns range from the costs, the safety, security of the data being collected and what it will be used for, the health implications which may stem from the microwave radiation that will be emitted daily and in perpetuity once these meters and necessary supporting infrastructure is installed, the accountability for possible future health impacts, insurance companies and liability coverage, and that although international and national regulatory bodies, some of

whose statements here are being defended by Fortis, regularly recognized that the long-term effects of low-level electromagnetic radiation are not fully understood and that the database for evaluation remains limited, continue to maintain that there is little or not risk from these emissions.

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My constituents and others are concerned with what appears to be, let's say, the *modus operandi* of labeling any opposition as a fringe or vocal minority with unfounded concerns. In my experience and the research that I've been doing, the more people that look into the contrasts and conflict between industry-funded and independently-funded scientific claims, the more grounds for concern they have, and not less.

I will be looking very carefully at the final Commission report accompanying the final decision on this application, and to see how much evaluation and weight is given to this contrast, as well as any conflict of interest by the vested interests involved. Thank you.