
Sent: Monday, January 4, 2021 12:47 PM
To: Commission, Secretary
Subject: Request to Intervene

Date Submitted: January 04, 2021

Proceeding name: Parkland - Advance Ruling on Confidentiality for FPTA Reporting Submissions

Participant contact information

Organization or individual name: Pieta Woolley - Powell River Living magazine

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For organizations only - representative contact information

Name:

Organization (if different from above):

City:

Province:

Email:

Phone number:

Also representing (if applicable):

Additional information

Please state your reasons for intervening in this proceeding:

I edit Powell River Living magazine, and live in this community. Individuals and businesses in Powell River and the surrounding region have been greatly impacted by the extraordinary price of fuel here - often about 23 cents more per litre than in neighbouring cities. For example, about 75 percent of families here have low or modest incomes; for much of 2019, two-car families were paying (on average) about \$60 extra a month in gas costs compared to neighbouring communities, based on average use statistics. \$60 is a very significant amount of after-tax money to many families. As a reporter, being able to identify why residents are being charged so much more than other communities is critical for citizen's trust of both corporations and government regulators. The Competition Bureau of Canada has not been interested in evaluating this community (or many others, I understand) for potential anti-competitive behaviour. Residents here feel abandoned by regulators.

Please state how you are directly or sufficiently affected by the Commission's decision in this matter; or describe your experience, information, or expertise relevant to this matter that would contribute to the Commission's decision making:

Starting in October of 2019, I wrote and PRL published a series of investigative articles (which are ongoing) about the extraordinarily high price of gas in Powell River compared to neighbouring communities, and that the price did not vary over time, or across gas stations. I have worked as a reporter for nearly two decades, and I have never encountered such a brick wall in my ability to find information - both from private companies and government - as I have with this story. I also co-hosted a town hall with the local MLA and MP on gas prices in December 2019. Since then, the local price has fallen, and varies, which tells me that this reporting work embarrassed local suppliers into changing their behaviour. Which is good. But as a reporter, I feel a responsibility to the community I serve in finding the answer to why prices were (and remain) so high, where the money went, and other questions. I wish to intervene in the case as I have unique experience as media in an impacted community and I can articulate exactly why the public should be able to see relevant data from the fuel companies that serve them.

Please list the key issues you intend to address in the proceeding:

* Current media access to fuel pricing information - corporate and government (such as transit tax) * The responsibilities of media in small communities * Potential collusion, gouging or monopoly behaviour in rural centres * The public interest in fuel pricing * The social impacts of extraordinary gas prices

For administrative purposes only

Do you intend to participate fully, including attendance at hearings and submission of evidence or information requests, if applicable?: Yes

Do you intend to request PACA funding? This does not impact your ability to participate: No

Have you or your organization web-registered as an intervener or interested party in the past 12 months?: No