Hello Mr. Morton and Panel Commissioners,

Subject: Letter of Objection and Complaint Regarding Site C Inquiry Process

I am writing to say the Site C Inquiry has been compromised at the very start by the structure of Sub – section 3(g) on the OIC No. 244. By having a Preliminary Report and a Final Report system, the BCUC is no longer conducting an economic assessment of the Site C [dam] project but is engaging in a “Polling Survey” of the B.C. electorate to determine: “are you either for, against, or neutral” about the Site C [dam] project.

I base this claim on my earlier involvement in the public hearing process for the Pacific NorthWest LNG Export Terminal Facility on Lelu Island that was conducted by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency. The hearing process was structured in the same way. It did not matter how much ‘input’ in terms of information or assessment was made by each of the participants, the only thing that mattered to the outside ‘examiners’ who were employed to do the submission assessment was to determine in to which ‘pigeon hole’ (i.e., for, against, or neutral) were each individual submission to be placed. The end result was not an assessment of the environmental impact of the project, but a statistical assessment of the Public’s “gut reaction” to the project so that the politicians involved with this project could make a ‘political decision’ that would cause the least amount of ‘political flak or backlash’.

For additional support of our argument, we also note the following:

1.) The short time span of the life of the Inquiry. (Eighty – two days until Final Report.)
2.) No intervenor presentations in the Inquiry process. Open to all interested parties. (We claim here that ‘interested parties’ will range from experienced knowledgeable
'experts’ through to people who will not know anything about the Site C [dam] project. We are not against democracy, but having input from people who ‘know nothing’ will move the Inquiry away from making a proper economic assessment.)

3.) The public hearings to be held around the province between 2017 September 20th to 2017 November 1st. (A Forty day time period.)

4.) The newspaper advertisements for gathering broad public input (e.g., “Public Notice: Site C Inquiry Initiated”, The Vancouver Courier, Thursday, August 10th, 2017, P. A11.) (We claim here the broader the audience, the less of each individual participant’s views will be heard in the economic assessment. In essence, they will be ‘drowned out’ by the democratic majority where all views will get condensed in to the simple form; in this case: for, against, or neutral.)

5.) The appointment of outside public auditors (i.e., Deloitte LLP) to do an assessment and tabulation of the public submissions in to the predetermined report format; namely, for, against, or neutral.

We therefore recommend that:

1.) The BCUC “advise the Lieutenant Governor in Council” regarding OIC No. 244 (issued 2017 August 2nd) to Void and Null this Inquiry.

2.) The BCUC recommend to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that it do its own “Polling/Marketing Survey” study through a commercial polling/marketing company. Such work is not the function of the BCUC.

Finally, thank you for your time and attention.

Signed,
Yours truly,
Keith William Steeves
Pres. &CEO
A.P.S.E. Inc.