

*Charlie Angus*

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Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-baie James

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HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

John Pecman  
Commissioner of Competition  
Competition Bureau  
50 Victoria Street  
Gatineau, Quebec  
K1A0C9

April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014

**RE: Gas Price Variance in Northern Ontario**

Mr. Pecman,

I am forwarding you the resolution passed by the City of Timmins regarding serious concerns being raised about gas pricing in the Timmins region. This is not the first time I have written your Bureau regarding the need to investigate pricing and possible price fixing in the Timmins region. Unfortunately, in previous correspondence your Bureau seemed reluctant to undertake an investigation. Now that the City of Timmins has formally requested your intervention I feel it is time to once again raise the concerns of frustration I hear all the time from northern residents.

The retail price of gas affects every family in Northern Ontario. With limited public transportation people rely on vehicles to work, sometimes over long distances. The discrepancy in price between the north and south can't simply be explained away by the cost of delivery. The outrageous discrepancy between Timmins and other communities is impacting our regional competitiveness. A difference of 10 or 20 cents a litre can seriously erode the bottom line of any northern business whether tourism, transportation, forestry, agriculture or mining.

We see in Timmins higher prices at all outlets than in surrounding communities. We see prices rising at the same time across every outlet in the City with little evidence of competition. It is the view of my constituents that the premium that they pay in fuel prices cannot be from competitive market prices.

Under the Competition act, price fixing and anti-competitive activities are illegal including agreeing to set common prices that will lessen or prevent competition in a serious way, trying to influence another retailer's price by agreement, threat or promise or persuading wholesalers to cut off gasoline supplies to discount retailers because they offer a lower price.

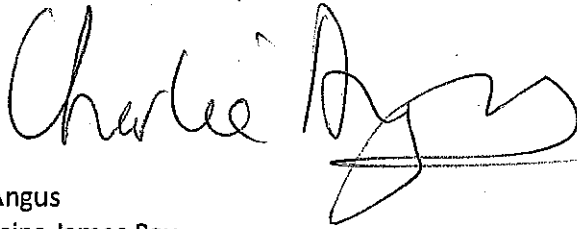
Under Section 45 of the Competition Act- Conspiracies, agreements, or arrangements between competitors: "every person commits an offence who, with a competitor of that person with respect to a product, conspires, agrees or arranges

- (a) To fix, maintain, increase, or control the price for the supply of the product;

- (b) To allocate sales, territories, customers or markets for the production or supply of the product  
or
- (c) To fix, maintain, control, prevent, lessen or eliminate the production or supply of the product

Penalty: Every person who commits an offence under subsection 1 is guilty of an indictable offence and liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 14 years or to a fine not exceeding 25 million, or to both."

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration in this matter. I look forward to receiving a response from your office at the nearest possible date.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charlie Angus". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Charlie Angus  
MP Timmins-James Bay