

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF CANADA  
(ON APPEAL FROM THE COURT OF APPEAL FOR ONTARIO)  
IN THE MATTER OF THE *GREENHOUSE GAS POLLUTION PRICING ACT*,  
SC 2018, c. 12, s. 186  
AND IN THE MATTER OF A REFERENCE BY THE LIEUTENANT  
GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL TO THE COURT OF APPEAL FOR ONTARIO  
UNDER THE *COURTS OF JUSTICE ACT*, RSO 1990, c. C.43, s. 8**

**BETWEEN:**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL OF ONTARIO**

**Appellant**

**-and-**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL OF CANADA**

**Respondent**

**-and-**

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(pursuant to r. 42 of the *Rules of the Supreme Court of Canada*)**

**(Title of Proceedings continued on p. 2)**

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## **PART I – OVERVIEW**

1. Here and in the courts below, Canada has defended the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* (“the Act”) relying almost entirely on the national concern doctrine. The interveners’ arguments on the national concern doctrine should be rejected: extra-provincial impacts, standing alone, are insufficient to transfer jurisdiction to the federal Parliament; and the national concern doctrine does not license the courts to assess the policy wisdom of provincial choices or the economic impact of federal legislation.

2. Canada now seeks to rely on any other potential head of power that an intervener might put forward. The interveners are not entitled to raise new issues.<sup>1</sup> If Canada wanted to support the Act using heads of power other than national concern, it should have done so itself.

3. None of the other heads of power raised by the interveners support the validity of the Act: Parliament did not purport to act on the basis of a national emergency and the Act is not temporary in nature; signing an international treaty does not give Parliament any power to legislate; the Act does not prohibit anyone from emitting greenhouse gases; the Act does not purport to regulate trade; and none of the other concepts raised by the interveners answer the question posed in this reference – did Parliament have jurisdiction to pass the Act?

## **PART II – FACTS**

4. Contrary to the arguments of several of the interveners, the evidence does not demonstrate that carbon pricing is the only or an essential part of a plan to fight climate change. Rather, the evidence demonstrates that at most, carbon pricing is an economically efficient means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Other measures may be equally effective in

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<sup>1</sup> Order of Wagner CJC dated December 4, 2019

reducing emissions, as Ontario’s experience with closing coal-fired power plants demonstrates.<sup>2</sup>

5. After Ontario filed its appeal factum, Canada announced its intention to introduce further legislative measures to “set legally-binding, five-year emissions-reductions milestones” that will exceed current 2030 targets and lead towards net-zero emissions by 2050.<sup>3</sup>

### **PART III – ARGUMENT**

#### **A. The Interveners’ National Concern Arguments Should Be Rejected**

6. Some of the interveners submit that greenhouse gas emissions should be a matter of national concern because they have extra-provincial impacts or pose collective action problems. If, however, extra-provincial impacts, standing alone, were sufficient to make a matter one of national concern, there would be little provincial jurisdiction left in today’s interconnected world. Almost all provincial decisions impact other provinces for better or for worse.

7. The risk of one province “free-riding” off another or facing a “collective action problem” is not sufficient to establish provincial inability. Indeed, Canadian provinces routinely co-operate to achieve positive nation-wide outcomes in other policy areas riddled with collective action problems, such as health care, securities regulation, and supply management. As argued in Ontario’s main factum at paras 52-58, national concern jurisdiction should be reserved for matters the provinces are *jurisdictionally* incapable of regulating.

8. Since Confederation, the economic union of the provinces into one federation has meant that laws passed by one province can impact the other provinces, even if they are squarely aimed at activities taking place in the enacting jurisdiction. A province’s minimum wage level may

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<sup>2</sup> For a recent discussion of the options available, see [Canada’s Ecofiscal Commission, “Bridging the Gap: Real Options for Meeting Canada’s 2030 GHG Target” \(November 2019\) at 15-30](#) submitted to the Alberta Court of Appeal and included in Alberta’s proposed evidence.

<sup>3</sup> [Mandate Letter from the Office of the Prime Minister to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change](#), 13 December 2019; Canada, House of Commons, [43<sup>rd</sup> Speech from the Throne](#) (5 December 2019)



have impacts on the labour markets of other provinces. Its level of public services may attract residents of other provinces to relocate. Regulatory variability and policy experimentation among different provinces is a central feature of Canada’s constitution, not a flaw to be fixed by expanding federal jurisdiction to include any matter with extra-provincial effects.

9. In the *Anti-Inflation Reference*, this Court held that the control of inflation was not appropriate for federal regulation under the national concern doctrine. Yet the very same arguments the interveners raise here would have applied to that case. One province’s attempts to encourage the growth of its industries can drive prices and wages higher which can have an adverse impact on another province whose economy is struggling. Yet that potential extra-provincial impact was insufficient for this Court to give Parliament jurisdiction over the broad and diffuse swathes of human activity that cause wage and price inflation. It should not do so for the similar activities that cause greenhouse gas emissions.

10. Parliament can only regulate otherwise provincial activities insofar as they impact matters of federal concern. For example, Parliament can regulate the impact of a dam on fisheries or navigation as it did in *Oldman River*. When it goes further and seeks to price those otherwise provincial activities or assess their impact on broad and diffuse matters like climate change (as for example under its new *Impact Assessment Act*<sup>4</sup>), it goes too far.

11. Unlike the marine and freshwater pollution in *Crown Zellerbach*, no distinction can be drawn between the intra- and extra-provincial impacts of greenhouse gas emissions to allow separate spheres of regulation, since they arise in identical fashion from identical sources. If Canada’s theory were accepted, paramount federal jurisdiction would apply to all local activities.

12. Oceans North’s argument that provincial inability is established wherever “the costs and

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<sup>4</sup> *Impact Assessment Act*, SC 2019, c 28, s. 1, s. 2; *Physical Activities Regulations*, SOR/2019-285, s. 2(1) and Sch. A (see “Oil, Gas and Other Fossil Fuels” and “Renewable Energy”)

benefits of [a regulated activity] are not evenly distributed”<sup>5</sup> between provinces invites this Court to opine on the merits of provincial policy choice in the impugned area, contrary to its repeated cautions that such an inquiry plays no role in division of powers analysis. The same is true of Ecofiscal’s argument that the impact on provincial jurisdiction is minimal because the Act before the Court is intended to have minimal *economic* impact. That argument mistakenly assumes the *Crown Zellerbach* test is predominantly about economic impact and overlooks that the transfer of jurisdiction to Parliament would be permanent and not limited to the particular statute at issue.

**B. The Act Cannot Be Upheld Under the Emergency Branch of POGG**

13. Parliament did not purport to rely on the emergency doctrine in passing the Act. Even if it had, nothing about the Act indicates that it is intended to be temporary. As this Court has repeatedly held, the national emergency doctrine can only be invoked to support “legislation of a temporary nature.”<sup>6</sup> The Court should not remove that essential requirement.

**(1) The National Concern and Emergency Doctrines Should Remain Distinct**

14. The national concern doctrine and the emergency doctrine are distinct doctrines, each with its own distinct tests developed to preserve jurisdictional balance in the federation. The two doctrines, and their respective tests, should not be blended.

15. The national concern doctrine results in the permanent addition of a new matter to the federal list of powers but its impact on provincial jurisdiction is limited by the requirement that the new matter must fall outside the provinces’ enumerated powers – either because it did not exist at Confederation or because it has been so transformed as to effectively become a new matter. The emergency doctrine is much broader. It effects a wholesale *transfer* of *existing* provincial legislative powers to Parliament *but only for the duration of the emergency*.

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<sup>5</sup> Factum of the Intervener, Oceans North Conservation Society, at para 11.

<sup>6</sup> *R v Crown Zellerbach Canada Ltd*, [1988] 1 SCR 401 at 430; *Re Anti-Inflation Act*, [1976] 2 SCR 373 at 427 (*per* Laskin CJ), 437 (*per* Ritchie J), and 461 (*per* Beetz J)

16. Blending the distinct doctrines would fail to provide sufficient safeguards for the continued co-sovereignty of the provincial legislatures. It would lead to courts assigning matters to federal jurisdiction based solely on the court’s view of the importance of particular federal policies, which this Court has repeatedly held to be impermissible. Both branches of POGG should remain distinct and predictable exceptions to the enumerated division of powers.

**(2) Parliament Did Not Purport to Rely on the Emergency Doctrine**

17. It is not sufficient for an intervener to argue that an emergency exists. There must be cogent evidence that *Parliament* intended to combat a national emergency at the time it passed the legislation. The debates the David Suzuki Foundation relies on took place in October 2018 and June 2019, months after the Act was passed in June 2018. The assessment of Parliament’s intent must be based on events that took place before the Act was passed.<sup>7</sup> As is clear from the Act’s legislative history, and as counsel for Canada acknowledged in argument below, Parliament did not purport to rely on the emergency doctrine at the time it passed the Act.

**(3) The Emergency Doctrine Must Continue to Be Limited to Temporary Legislation**

18. The temporary nature of the emergency doctrine is an essential safeguard to ensure a national emergency cannot result in the indefinite override of provincial legislative sovereignty. Unlike laws upheld under the national concern doctrine, a federal law can be upheld under the emergency doctrine no matter how much it intrudes on provincial jurisdiction. As this Court held in the *Anti-Inflation Reference*, “in practice the emergency doctrine operates as a partial and *temporary* alteration of the distribution of power between Parliament and the provincial Legislatures.”<sup>8</sup> Such an alteration can only be made permanent by a constitutional amendment.

19. In emergency circumstances, the courts have been rightfully hesitant to second-guess

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<sup>7</sup> *R v Big M Drug Mart Ltd*, [1985] 1 SCR 295 at 334-36

<sup>8</sup> *Anti-Inflation Reference*, *supra* at 427 (*per* Laskin CJ), 437 (*per* Ritchie J), 461 (*per* Beetz J)

determinations by the democratically-elected federal executive, acting under express delegation from Parliament, as to the exact duration of a given temporary emergency (although administrative law and constitutional limitations on such executive discretion clearly exist).<sup>9</sup> Emergency legislation which is truly intended to be temporary (even though no one can know in advance exactly how long the emergency will exist) should not be confused with permanent legislation such as the Act, which has no temporary features on its face, which makes no reference in its text or legislative history to the existence of an emergency, and which requires no declaration or determination by anyone that an emergency exists. No permanent legislation of this kind has ever been upheld under the emergency branch.

**(4) The Act Is Not Temporary in Nature**

20. Nothing about the Act suggests it is temporary. The Act's Preamble shows the Act is aimed at an ongoing problem requiring ongoing measures. It states "the pricing of greenhouse gas emissions on a basis *that increases over time* is an appropriate and efficient way to create incentives for [...] behavioural change." It says that Canada has ratified the *Paris Agreement*, whose aim is "*holding* the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels." It adds that Canada is committed to achieving its contribution under the *Paris Agreement* "and *increasing it over time*."<sup>10</sup> None of this language suggests Parliament sees greenhouse gas emissions as a temporary problem requiring temporary legislation.

21. The documents referred to in the Preamble also suggest the Act is intended to operate indefinitely. The Preamble states Canada has ratified the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (the "Convention"), whose objective is "the *stabilization* of greenhouse gas concentrations." It is not known how long measures will be necessary to maintain such a

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<sup>9</sup> *Fort Frances Pulp & Power Co Ltd v Manitoba Free Press Co Ltd*, [1923] AC 695 (PC)

<sup>10</sup> *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*, SC 2018, c 12, s. 186, Preamble [Emphasis added]

stabilization if achieved. The Convention itself sets no time limit on its operation.<sup>11</sup>

22. The *Paris Agreement* itself sets no end point on its operation and does not mention 2030 at all. Article 4, paragraph 3 of the *Paris Agreement* states that “[e]ach Party’s successive nationally determined contribution will represent a progression beyond the Party’s then nationally determined contribution.” The *Paris Agreement* thus contemplates parties like Canada progressively making their greenhouse gas emission reduction targets more stringent over time, not merely addressing the issue temporarily.<sup>12</sup>

23. The charges the Act imposes are not set to end at any particular time. Schedule 2 sets out fuel charge rates that increase each year from 2018 to 2021, with even higher rates applicable “after 2021.” Schedule 4 similarly sets out excess emission charge rates that increase each year from 2018 to 2022, with the 2022 rate applying to all subsequent years. The Governor in Council can increase both rates even further by regulation.<sup>13</sup>

24. Rather than demonstrating that it intends to end the Act’s operation in the relatively near future, Canada has recently announced that it intends to set further emissions reduction milestones that will exceed current 2030 targets and lead to net-zero emissions by **2050**.<sup>14</sup> There is no precedent for recognizing that legislation intended to have effect for at least **30 years** is sufficiently temporary in nature to be upheld under the emergency branch of POGG.

### **C. Treaties Do Not Give Parliament Any Greater Legislative Power**

25. As the Privy Council held in *Labour Conventions* and this Court recently reaffirmed in

<sup>11</sup> *GGPPA, supra*, Preamble; Affidavit of John Moffet, Ex. H, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (9 May 1992), Record of the Attorney General of Canada [Canada’s Record], Vol. 2, Tab 1H [Emphasis added], Canada’s Record, Vol. 2, Tab 1L, pp. 318-42

<sup>12</sup> Affidavit of John Moffet, Ex. I, *Paris Agreement* (12 December 2015), Art. 4 para. 3, Canada’s Record, Vol. 2, Tab 1I, p. 366

<sup>13</sup> *GGPPA, supra*, ss. 166(4), 168(1), 168(2)(b) and (c), 168(3), 174(3)(b), 174(5), 178(2), 181(3), and 191 and Schs. 2 and 4

<sup>14</sup> Mandate Letter, *supra* at 2-3

the *Pan-Canadian Securities Reference*,<sup>15</sup> international treaties are binding on Canada in international law but can *only* be implemented domestically in spheres of provincial jurisdiction by way of provincial legislative enactment. If the federal executive wishes to fulfill its international obligations, it must convince the provincial legislatures to pass the necessary legislation by persuasion or incentives using the spending power. It cannot simply ask Parliament to legislate on the basis that treaty compliance is a matter of national concern.

26. The holding in *Labour Conventions* remains good law because it is necessary to sustain Canada's constitutional architecture. Unlike the constitutions of other federations, Canada's constitution does not give the federal Parliament an express power to implement treaties (save for the power to implement Imperial treaties).<sup>16</sup> The national concern doctrine should not be used to indirectly give Parliament the power to do what it cannot do directly.

27. Rather, in Canada, the power to legislate over all possible matters is divided between Parliament and the provincial legislatures by sections 91 to 94A of the *Constitution Act, 1867*. Since 1982, that division of powers can only be changed by a constitutional amendment under the general amending formula. The provinces must have a say in constitutional amendments that significantly affect their powers. The federal government cannot, by treaty, change the constitutional bargain without the provincial consent needed for a constitutional amendment.<sup>17</sup>

#### **D. The Act Cannot Be Upheld Under the Criminal Law Power**

28. The Act is not a valid exercise of Parliament's criminal law power. The Act lacks a

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<sup>15</sup> 2018 SCC 48, [2018] 3 SCR 189

<sup>16</sup> *Reference re Senate Reform*, 2014 SCC 32 at paras. 26-27, [2014] 1 SCR 32; United States, *Constitution*, Art. II, §2, cl. 2 and Art. VI, §2; *Constitution (Cth.)*, s. 51(xxix); *Constitution Act, 1867* (UK), 30&31 Vict., c. 3, s. 132

<sup>17</sup> *Constitution Act, 1867*, ss. 91-95; *Constitution Act, 1982*, s. 38, Schedule B to the Canada Act, 1982 (UK), 1982, c. 11; *Senate Reference*, *supra* at paras. 29-31

prohibition, a fundamental element of criminal law.<sup>18</sup> The Act does not prohibit greenhouse gas emissions in whole or in part. Persons subject to the Act are free to consume as much fuel or make as many products as they see fit, so long as they pay the charges the Act imposes.

29. Preventing people from engaging in certain activities for free is not a prohibition; it is a price. Accepting that legislation structured this way falls within Parliament’s criminal law power would radically expand the scope of the power. On such a theory, Parliament could impose a price on any type of activity by “prohibiting” the free conduct of the activity.

30. Complex regulatory schemes have been upheld as valid exercises of Parliament’s criminal law power. In each of those cases, however, there was an underlying prohibition of the activity being regulated, with exceptions which can at times be complex. By contrast, here, the prohibitions and penalties in the Act do not independently serve a valid criminal law purpose. They are confined to ensuring administrative compliance with the Act’s pricing scheme.<sup>19</sup>

#### **E. The Act Cannot Be Upheld Under the Trade and Commerce Power**

31. The Act is not a valid exercise of Parliament’s trade and commerce jurisdiction. As Canada itself admits, the Act is intended to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, not trade in goods or services. The emitting activities governed by the Act are the type of “day-to-day conduct” the provinces regulate.<sup>20</sup> Like the proposed federal legislation struck down in the 2011 *Securities Reference* and unlike that upheld in the 2018 *Pan-Canadian Securities Reference*, the Act does not confine itself to regulating only those aspects of greenhouse gas emissions that are **qualitatively** different from the local activities that the provinces can and long have regulated.

Instead, it reaches beyond such matters and seeks to impose a price on almost **all** activities that

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<sup>18</sup> *Quebec (AG) v Canada (AG)*, 2015 SCC 14 at para. 33, [2015] 1 SCR 693; *Reference re Firearms Act*, 2000 SCC 31 at para. 27, [2000] 1 SCR 783

<sup>19</sup> *Firearms Reference*, *supra* at paras. 38-39

<sup>20</sup> *General Motors of Canada Ltd v City National Leasing*, [1989] 1 SCR 641; *Reference re Securities Act*, 2011 SCC 66 at paras. 112-116, [2011] 3 SCR 837

cause greenhouse gas emissions, most of which have long been viewed as provincial.<sup>21</sup>

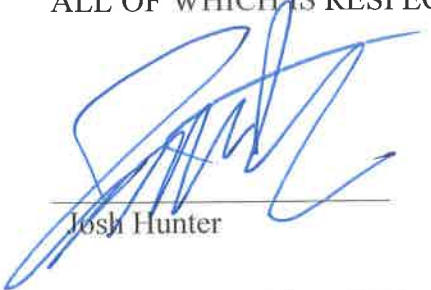
**F. The Interveners' Other Arguments Do Not Provide a Basis for Determining Whether Parliament Has Jurisdiction to Enact the Act**

32. The interveners attempt to support federal jurisdiction by referring to a variety of legal doctrines, including the Honour of the Crown, section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, and section 7 of the *Charter*. Under our Constitution, none of these doctrines has a role in determining which level of government can pass a particular law.

33. It is not appropriate for this Court to rule on whether section 7 of the *Charter* imposes positive duties on governments when the issue was raised for the first time by an intervenor on appeal. There is insufficient evidence on the record to provide a factual matrix.<sup>22</sup> In any event, *Charter* rights apply to both Parliament and the provincial legislatures. Section 7 does not answer which has jurisdiction over a particular matter.

34. Similarly, neither section 35 nor the Honour of the Crown determine whether Parliament has jurisdiction to enact the Act. Both Canada and the provinces are constitutionally required to respect section 35 rights and act in accordance with the Honour of the Crown within their respective spheres of action. If a specific federal or provincial decision is said to engage section 35 or the Honour of the Crown, it can be challenged in an appropriate proceeding.<sup>23</sup>

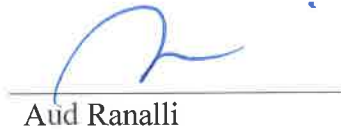
ALL OF WHICH IS RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED THIS 10<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2020



Josh Hunter



Padraic Ryan



Aud Ranalli

<sup>21</sup> *Securities Reference*, *supra* at paras. 70, 79, and 113-14; *Pan-Canadian Securities Reference*, *supra* at paras. 107 and 110-12

<sup>22</sup> *Danson v Ontario (Attorney General)*, [1990] 2 SCR 1086 at 1099-1011

<sup>23</sup> *Manitoba Metis Federation Inc v Canada (Attorney General)*, 2013 SCC 14 at para. 69, [2013] 1 SCR 623



## PART VII – AUTHORITIES

<b>JURISPRUDENCE</b>	<b>Paragraph(s) Referred to in Factum</b>
<a href="#"><i>Danson v Ontario (Attorney General)</i></a> , [1990] 2 SCR 1086	33
<a href="#"><i>Fort Frances Pulp &amp; Power Co Ltd v Manitoba Free Press Co Ltd</i></a> , [1923] AC 695 (PC)	19
<a href="#"><i>General Motors of Canada Ltd v City National Leasing</i></a> , [1989] 1 SCR 641	31
<a href="#"><i>Manitoba Metis Federation Inc v Canada (Attorney General)</i></a> , 2013 SCC 14, [2013] 1 SCR 623	34
<a href="#"><i>Pan-Canadian Securities Reference</i></a> , 2018 SCC 48, [2018] 3 SCR 189	25, 31
<a href="#"><i>Quebec (AG) v Canada (AG)</i></a> , 2015 SCC 14, [2015] 1 SCR 693	28
<a href="#"><i>R v Big M Drug Mart Ltd</i></a> , [1985] 1 SCR 295	17
<a href="#"><i>R v Crown Zellerbach Canada Ltd</i></a> , [1988] 1 SCR 401	13
<a href="#"><i>Re Anti-Inflation Act</i></a> , [1976] 2 SCR 373	13, 18
<a href="#"><i>Reference re Firearms Act</i></a> , 2000 SCC 31, [2000] 1 SCR 783	28, 30
<a href="#"><i>Reference re Securities Act</i></a> , 2011 SCC 66, [2011] 3 SCR 837	31
<a href="#"><i>Reference re Senate Reform</i></a> , 2014 SCC 32, [2014] 1 SCR 32	26, 27

<b>LEGISLATION</b>	<b>Paragraph(s) Referred to in Factum</b>
<a href="#"><i>Constitution</i></a> (Cth.), s. 51(xxix)	26
<i>Constitution Act, 1867</i> (UK), 30&31 Vict., c. 3, s. 132 English: ss. <a href="#">91-95</a> Français : arts. <a href="#">91-95</a>	26, 27

<b>LEGISLATION</b>	<b>Paragraph(s) Referred to in Factum</b>
<i>Constitution Act, 1982</i> , Schedule B to the Canada Act, 1982 (UK), 1982, c. 11 English: s. <a href="#">38</a> Français : art. <a href="#">38</a>	27
<i>Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act</i> , SC 2018, c 12, s. 186 English: <a href="#">Preamble</a> , ss. <a href="#">166(4)</a> , <a href="#">168(1)</a> , <a href="#">168(2)(b)-(c)</a> , <a href="#">168(3)</a> , <a href="#">174(3)(b)</a> , <a href="#">174(5)</a> , <a href="#">178(2)</a> , <a href="#">181(3)</a> , <a href="#">191</a> , Schedules <a href="#">2</a> , <a href="#">4</a> Français: <a href="#">Préambule</a> , arts. <a href="#">166(4)</a> , <a href="#">168(1)</a> , <a href="#">168(2)(b)-(c)</a> , <a href="#">168(3)</a> , <a href="#">174(3)(b)</a> , <a href="#">174(5)</a> , <a href="#">178(2)</a> , <a href="#">181(3)</a> , <a href="#">191</a> , Annexes <a href="#">2</a> , <a href="#">4</a>	20, 21, 23
<i>Impact Assessment Act</i> , SC 2019, c 28, s. 1 English: s. <a href="#">2</a> Français : art. <a href="#">2</a>	10
<i>Physical Activities Regulations</i> , SOR/2019-285 English: s. <a href="#">2(1)</a> , <a href="#">Schedule A</a> (see “Oil, Gas and Other Fossil Fuels” and “Renewable Energy”) Français : arts. <a href="#">2(1)</a> , <a href="#">Annexe A</a> (“Pétrole, gaz et autres combustibles fossiles” et “Énergie renouvelable”)	10
United States, <a href="#">Constitution</a> , <a href="#">Art. II, §2, cl. 2</a> and <a href="#">Art. VI, §2</a>	26

<b>SECONDARY SOURCES</b>	<b>Paragraph(s) Referred to in Factum</b>
Canada, House of Commons, <a href="#">43<sup>rd</sup> Speech from the Throne</a> (5 December 2019)	4
Canada’s Ecofiscal Commission, “ <a href="#">Bridging the Gap: Real Options for Meeting Canada’s 2030 GHG Target</a> ” (November 2019)	4
<a href="#">Mandate Letter from the Office of the Prime Minister to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change</a> , 13 December 2019	4, 24