

Summary of Question Period for Thursday May 11/17

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MPP Smith (PC) to Minister Thibeault (Energy) – re: FOI and the new Hydro Plan

>> MPP Smith: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question this morning is for the Minister of energy. Speaker, yesterday I received an order paper response from the Minister but it really wasn't much of a response. He said he couldn't answer my question and that I should submit a **freedom of information request**. What I wanted was documents and correspondence from January and February, from the ministry, I.e. S.o.and O.P.G. To use word like fees, commissions, broker, lender and refinancing. Now the Minister knows that this House is going to have to vote on legislation that he brings forward. **So why is he trying to get members to pay for information that they should have before we vote on legislation?**

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and of course I always like to stand and, you know, address the questions that are brought forward by the opposition. Of course, Mr. Speaker, the Ontario fair hydro plan and the relief that is coming is an important issue and it's a position, you know, where we stand in this House on this topic is very well known, Mr. Speaker. But, you know, what's the position of the official opposition when it comes to their plan, Mr. Speaker? It makes you wonder. It's been almost 70 days now in which the leader of the opposition stood and said that they have a plan forthcoming. It went from a three-point plan, Mr. Speaker. To five-point plan to a zero-point plan, Mr. Speaker. You know part of the role of the opposition. Should be putting forward a credible alternative and, Mr. Speaker, we're still waiting for anything credible coming from that party.

>> MPP Smith: Speaker, if the Minister would like us to do his job for him, we would gladly do it but our job is to scrutinize the plan that they are putting forward, and the people of Ontario deserve to know if the government's hydro plan involves millions or billions paid out in fees to brokers or bankers. It may as well be brought to you by Goldman Sachs at this point. The people of Ontario deserve to know. Because by the government's own admission, those fees will be recoverable on their hydro rates. So will the Minister turn over exactly the documents I asked for in my order paper question or will this be yet another Liberal scheme done in the back rooms by a Liberal Minister who's got his hand in the pocket of ratepayers?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's important that I do remind the critic from the opposition party, as the critic for the energy file, that he did attend

a technical briefing where officials gave him all the details of our plan. So, you know, we're more than happy to share more information with him. And I know we offered an additional technical briefing, and I do agree, Mr. Speaker, that it is the role of the official opposition to make sure that, you know, they question what the government is doing. I understand that role. And you know what? It also takes courage, Mr. Speaker, to bring forward a plan, to talk about what they would do differently. And who thinks that, Mr. Speaker ? Let me read a quote. I think the challenge for anyone who aspires to be **Premier**, any party that aspires to serve in government is to say what we would do. Do you know who said that, Mr. Speaker ? The leader of the official opposition. It's just too bad when it comes to energy, or Ontario, they have no plan at all.