

[PC RELEASE] Minister Thibeault must face Sudbury ratepayers over hydro increase: Brown

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Ontario PC Leader Patrick Brown is calling on Energy Minister and Sudbury MPP Glenn Thibeault to attend the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) hearing in Sudbury this evening and justify why he won't direct the OEB to reject an application from Hydro One for a \$141 per year hydro rate hike.

"While families and seniors struggle to put food on the table, Hydro One gave their CEO a nearly 4 million dollar raise. Now they want to pay for these egregious executive salaries by raising hydro rates even higher," said Brown. "It's unfair, it's unaffordable, and it has to be stopped."

Earlier this month the Ontario PCs launched a campaign to stop the rate hike, including delivering more than 2,200 letters to the OEB urging them to reject the rate hike until executive compensation is reined in. Ontario PC Leader Patrick Brown also wrote a letter to Premier Kathleen Wynne asking her to order the OEB to stop the hike, but the Wynne Liberals have refused to act.

"We knew all along that Kathleen Wynne and Glenn Thibeault would raise rates after the next election, but we didn't think they would be so out of touch to rubberstamp even more massive rate hikes a year out from an election," added Brown. "Minister Thibeault should go to tonight's hearing and listen to what his own constituents have to say about even higher hydro bills, and tell them why he won't stop this rate hike."

The Ontario PCs have sent representatives to hearings throughout the province, with Nipissing MPP Vic Fedeli attending in Sudbury.

"Only the Ontario PCs are fighting for affordability. We want Ontario families to pay less and get ahead, and will continue fighting until this rate hike is stopped and egregious hydro executive salaries are reined in," concluded Brown.

BACKGROUND

Despite claiming otherwise, the Wynne Liberals have the power to stop Hydro One's application for an unfair and unaffordable rate hike:

- As a part of the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998, at any point in time, the Minister of Energy can issue a directive to the OEB. Since 1999, both Liberal and PC Ministers of Energy have issued 20 directives to the OEB, including three from Minister Thibeault himself.
- On top of that, Minister Thibeault has previously requested the OEB to lower rates. As recently as April 2017, Minister Thibeault wrote to the Ontario Energy Board telling them to lower electricity prices before the Legislature passed the "Unfair" Hydro Plan. Coincidentally, this was to the benefit of the Ontario Liberal Party.

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