TRANSCRIPT – Patrick Brown on AM980 – May 25, 2017

MPP:

Media: AM 980 Andrew Lawton

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Lawton: Patrick great to have you on the show again. Thanks for coming on today

Brown:
- Great to be back on the show

Lawton: So, let's start with the big question here. You've been sound the alarm – your caucus has been sounding the alarm about this hydro rate reduction here. We knew it was going to add to the debt. Did you know it would be this much?

Brown
- It's staggering
- We knew this was an election gimmick
- They're not addressing any of the structural problems
- It was just a borrowing plan
- But to hear that it's going to cost us $93-billion
- That we're going to see hydro rates skyrocket just after the election, is scary
- Anytime the Liberals touch hydro
- They make it worse
- Under their **inaudible**- they've raised hydro rates 400%
- And people can barely pay their bills right now
- And the fact that it's going to get worse
- Just so they can look good in election
- It's disgusting

Lawton: One of the big concerns that I would have is that they're offering the short-term relief of 25%, including the 8% that's already off here. And they're doing this – as you mentioned – by having rates that are going to go up in debt. That's going to go up over the next 30 years, including right after the election. But, does this put you in a tricky situation. Because if you were to stop this, that would mean jacking back up hydro rates

Brown
- No actually
- We're going to prevent hydro rates from going up
- By trying to stop this
- Listen, if we can convince to stop it right now, it's better for Ontario

- But right after the election, hydro rates are going to skyrocket
- I want to stop that from happening
- The only way to stop that from happening is to fix the structural problems in hydro
- And this government is unwilling to do it
- They're doubling down on their bad policy
- Just after they announced this fair hydro scheme
- Or the borrowing plan they have
- Just after they proceeded with 1100 more energy contracts
- For energy we don't need
- They're doubling down on bad policy

Lawton: But if they're only accomplishing this reduction and then keeping rates at inflation afterwards. Or that's certainly the goal they're presenting here. And there needing to this by drastically increasing the debt. How will you be able to do that same outcome without the debt impact?

Brown

- So, first off right after the election, it will skyrocket
- And how we're going to prevent that from happening is I'm actually going to address the structural problem in hydro
- Let me speak about that briefly
- Last year we generated 145 terawatt hours of energy
- From our main sources: waterpower, natural gas and nuclear
- As the province we only consumed 137 terawatt hours
- So all the renewables in the province we were wasting
- We were giving it away to Michigan, Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York
- And our own water power – because we had so much excess – we're spilling
- Last year we spilt 4.8 billion kilowatt hours from our water power facilities
- So Merrickville, Manitou, Niagara Falls – water power facilities that have been paid for, for decades
- Bought and paid for
- We are spilling water
- This has nothing to do with green energy
- Because our own green energy, we're wasting
- Because of these bad foreign contracts they keep on signing
- And people say how does that affect me?
- It affects you because of the global adjustment
- On the commercial or industrial bill you see it
- It's pretty obvious
- It's about half of your bill
- And on the residential, it's hidden
- Now I can't get back the gas plant money
- That's lost

- But I can really cut into this global adjustment
- We can hydro rates down by making sure, not only do we look at all the existing bad ugly contracts that Wynne signed
- But we also stop signing new ones
- And the ones where there notice **inaudible** hasn't gone out
- We can get out of that completely with no – with no cost
- We can't continue to produce way more energy than we need
- We can't continue to charge Ontarians through your hydro bills
- To simply give it away to our competitors
- And I get why the Liberals won't do it
- The 30 mega deals they got $1.3-million in donations
- They're not going to look at these deals
- Because they're their friend
- They're their supporters
- They're protecting them
- But I tell you what Andrew, I'm going to look at these bad deals
- I'm going to stop signing them
- I'm going to clean up this mess

Lawton: Will your plan require honouring a lot of these – just because they've already been committed, or will you stop them entirely. Even if it means reneging on commitments this government has made

Brown

- Any of these ugly bad deals that the Liberals signed, I will look in to
- You look at the Samsung deal
- The Samsung deal, it's the only one we actually have a copy of the contract for
- The other 29, they've hidden the contracts
- With that itself, they're obviously hiding something
- But in the Samsung deal, we could've got out of a billion and a half of surplus electricity
- There was an exit clause
- For billion and a half
- And instead of taking that exit clause, they bought the extra energy
- Because the Minister didn't want to appear like he was walking away from his Green Energy Act
- So for politics, they blew a billion and a half
- Let me know say, whatever exit clauses out there
- Whatever legal tools there to get out of these bad deals
- I'm going to take them
- Because I can't continue to charge Ontarians for energy we don't need

Lawton: Is that not going to create the same problem we saw when the gas plant contracts were torn up. That we're still out this money, but at this point we're not getting what was already committed for

Brown
- Well no
- First of all, we’re not using any of that
- As I said before, all this renewable energy
- None of it we’re using
- We’re simply giving it away
- We’re subsidizing our competitors
- And let me say, where there are legal avenues to get out of them
- We’ll take them
- If there similar exit clauses as it was in the Samsung deal and all the other deals
- We would be out of all our surplus electricity
- We’d solve it right there
- But we don’t know
- Because Kathleen Wynne is hiding these contracts
- And I ask again, why do you think she’s hiding these contracts?
- Why are they embarrassed on what they signed
- And I get they got $1.3-million in donations
- But why cover it up?
- If you have nothing to hide, this should be transparent

Lawton: So let’s talk about what can be guaranteed. Or what can be really taken from what you’re saying here, for Ontarians for hydro rates. You’re saying you’re going to stop them from hiking up after the election. Is keeping it at the rate of inflation from there on in an attainable goal in your view?

Brown
- Well I actually want to get hydro rates dramatically down
- Keeping it to the rate of inflation isn’t good enough in my books
- I’m really going to – our efforts are going to be really get these down – to really push back against this global adjustment
- It’s a huge part of the bill
- Ask any business person to look at their global adjustment, how huge it is
- It’s hidden on the residential
- But absolutely
- I think we can get rates down
- We have to
- Because families can’t afford it
- And frankly we’re losing jobs
- I was at London North Star Ice recently
- And they were telling me they were getting pitches from other states to operate elsewhere
- I want to keep these jobs here
- If we don’t fix this mess, we’re going to lose jobs in Ontario

Lawton: I wanted to move away from the hydro file for a moment and ask you a little bit about –

[END TRANSCRIPT]