Evening Media Scan - Hydro Rate Reduction - August 9, 2017

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Date: Wed, 09 Aug 2017 21:00:59 -0400

Attachments: 20170809 - Media Scan - Hydro Rate Reduction (Evening).doc (76.8 kB)

Evening Media Scan: August 9, 2017

MEDIA SCAN: HYDRO RATE REDUCTION PLAN

August 9, 2017

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Bayshore Broadcasting: Delaney Gives Talk At Bruce Power

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Toronto Sun TIME TO WORRY, ONTARIO ELECTRICITY USERS

By: Lorrie Goldstein, Toronto Sun
Tuesday, August 08, 2017 08:15 PM EDT

http://www.torontosun.com/2017/08/08/time-to-worry-ontario-electricity-users

It was nice to hear from Ontario Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault on Tuesday that Ontario will only buy hydro power from Hydro Quebec if it's a good deal for the taxpayers of Ontario.

Sadly, his resolve comes almost a decade too late to do Ontarians much good, because that's never been the policy of the McGuinty-Wynne Liberal government up to now.

This given that they've already wasted $9.2 billion of our money paying inflated prices for unreliable and unnecessary wind and solar power for 20 years — according to Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk.

Indeed, where was the Wynne government's concern for Ontario taxpayers and electricity ratepayers when the Liberals were signing those deals — now paying Ontario wind developers twice the U.S. average price for wind power, and 3 1/2 times the U.S. average price for solar power, according to the auditor general?

Why did the 20-year contracts they signed with these developers require that we had to buy their electricity first, which means the entire electricity generation system is now running less efficiently than it should, in order to accommodate unreliable and expensive wind and solar power?

That's because when we aren't paying wind and solar developers outrageous, locked-in prices to produce electricity for 20 years, we're paying them outrageous, locked-in prices not to produce electricity, or we're selling other, cheaper forms of green energy, like our own hydro power, at a loss to Quebec and the U.S.

This is happening, year in and year out, because Ontario has a huge energy surplus caused in part by — wait for it — high electricity prices, which have doubled over a decade to become the highest in Canada due to the Liberals' reckless energy policies, which have gutted much of the province's manufacturing sector.

Thibeault's position on Tuesday was intended to knock down a story in the Quebec newspaper La Presse.

It said the Wynne government had signed yet another foolish electricity contract (my word, not La Presse's), this time with Hydro Quebec, to supply 6% of Ontario's energy needs for the next

20 years, by buying Quebec hydro power at inflated prices (6.12 cents per kWh, compared to the going rate of 4.8 cents per kWh), with a 2% annual escalator cause for the duration of the contract.

Thibeault's office denied the La Presse story that Ontario had agreed to the deal, releasing a copy of a July 27 letter he sent to Quebec Energy Minister Pierre Arcand.

It said Quebec's offer was unacceptable because it would cost the average Ontario household $30 more per year in electricity bills and require Ontario to curtail its own wind, solar and hydro power in order to buy hydro power from Quebec.

But Thibeault's letter also made it clear the Ontario government is continuing to negotiate with Quebec to buy a lot more of Quebec's hydro power than the two governments have previously announced.

On the face of it, the terms of the deal obtained by La Presse would be horrible for Ontario, which tends to make Thibeault's explanation that the province had refused to sign it credible.

But the concern is that the McGuinty-Wynne Liberals have signed so many other awful electricity deals — including the one for green energy from South Korea's Samsung Corp., which they have since had to dramatically downsize — that there's always the worry Ontario taxpayers and electricity ratepayers will get fleeced yet again.

Indeed, that's the scariest thing of all.

GlobalSt. Thomas hospital's electricity bill surged 75 per cent

By: Liny Lamberink
August 8, 2017 8:01 pm

http://globalnews.ca/news/3656182/st-thomas-hospitals-electricity-bill-surged-75-per-cent-since-2012/

Electricity bills at the St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital have climbed by more than $581,000 since 2012, according to documents received through a freedom of information request by the Canadian Taxpayers Federation.

Over the last five years, the cost to power the main campus of the facility rose 75 per cent — up from nearly $780,000 in 2012 to $1.36 million.

"Instead of paying $581,000 more for electricity, they could have paid for something that matters to the community, like new CT scanners," explained Christine Van Geyn, the federation's Ontario director.

"That amount of money could have bought seven new CT scanners."

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation is running a campaign in opposition to the Green Energy Act and cap-and-trade. Van Geyn says money is being thrown away needlessly, and it's an example of how the province is hurting communities with its energy policies.

READ MORE: Provincial hydro bill subsidy program goes largely unnoticed by Londoners

"It's not just us in our homes who are struggling, it's the institutions that we rely on, schools and hospitals. That's our tax money that's being wasted on additional charges for electricity because the government decided to mismanage the electricity sector in this province."

Van Geyn is urging people to write their MPs, in hopes of putting an end to green-energy contracts.

"A lot of these green-energy contracts, where you see the government paying multiple times the market rate for wind and solar power — power that we don't even use in a lot of cases — and it gets exported to other jurisdictions… we're subsidizing electricity in the United States when we can't even afford to pay our own bills at home."

AM980 reached out to the St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital, but a spokesperson was unavailable for comment.

Bayshore Broadcasting
Delaney Gives Talk At Bruce Power

By: John Divinski
Wednesday, August 9, 2017

http://www.bayshorebroadcasting.ca/news_item.php?NewsID=95180

Bob Delaney, Parliamentary Assistant to Ontario's Minister of Energy, says his government is committed to the "Fair Hydro Plan."

Delaney was speaking to a luncheon gathering at Bruce Power in Tiverton, where he presented employees a certificate of recognition for a record operational run on Unit 3, of 368 days.

It was shut down on August 1st for a planned life-extension outage.

After the event, Delaney says Bruce Power is very much a major player in providing energy to the province for decades to come.

He says the recent 25% reduction in hydro costs for users, was to assure everyone, now and in the future, is being treated fairly.

Delaney points out, "We were amortizing our big purchases only over a portion of their lives. In essence, overcharging people today so that people in the future get it for less than its fair-market value."

He says by amortizing over the life of the assets, they are now able to reduce hydro costs to the consumer by 25% and end up with a fair charge for the commodity, going forward.

Delaney says his government believes the plan is good for the province and will stick to it, in the future.

Delaney complimented Bruce Power for being a "Low cost generator of electricity for many decades to come, while also driving economic growth."

President and CEO of Bruce Power Mike Rencheck says having stable policies in Ontario will assist in allowing the nuclear facility to move forward, "while keeping power prices low for the citizens of Ontario."

Rencheck says the operation of the Bruce site through 2064 will create and sustain 22,000 direct and indirect jobs annually.

TV Transcripts

None