

Evening Media Scan - Hydro Rate Reduction - July 24, 2017

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MEDIA SCAN: HYDRO RATE REDUCTION PLAN

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Online Coverage

Peterborough Examiner: Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault speaking in Friday

By: The Peterborough Examiner
Monday, July 24, 2017 2:03:46 EDT PM

<http://www.thepeterboroughexaminer.com/2017/07/24/energy-minister-glenn-thibeault-speaking-in-peterborough-on-friday>

Ontario Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault is making a stop in Peterborough on Friday as part of a swing through Ontario this week to defend the provincial government's recent energy policy moves.

Thibeault is scheduled to attend a Peterborough Chamber of Commerce Power Lunch event from 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Friday at the Peterborough Golf and Country Club at 1030 Armour Rd. in the city's northeast end.

Thibeault will speak at the luncheon and then hold a question and answer session with chamber members and guests.

He was scheduled to make stops Monday in Chatham and Aylmer in southwestern Ontario on his tour.

The ruling Ontario Liberals have been under pressure over skyrocketing electricity prices that had essentially doubled over a decade until the province moved to cut rates by 25 per cent starting July 1.

Last Tuesday, one of four companies lured to Ontario to set up green energy manufacturing plants under a multibillion-dollar deal between the province and Korean industrial giant Samsung, announced it's closing its Tillsonburg plant. Siemens, which partnered with Samsung, said it's laying off more than 200 workers immediately, and the rest of the 340 will be gone by January when the plant that makes blades for wind turbines closes.

Then, Vancouver-based think-tank the Fraser Institute reported Ontario's increases in electricity prices have run more than double the national average over the past decade, heaping new fuel on the fire for opposition critics as the province heads into an election year.

A wave of sell-offs and mergers in the electrical business in Ontario, including takeovers by giant Hydro One, has reduced the number of municipal utilities in the province from hundreds a generation ago to dozens now. Hydro One has reached a deal to takeover Peterborough Distribution Inc., the poles and wires hydro distribution arm of City of Peterborough-owned Peterborough Utilities.

After Siemens announced the Tillsonburg plant closing, Thibeault said he's confident green energy will remain a key part of the Ontario economy and its energy supply.

The company cited dried-up orders and industry demands for larger blades than it can't produce as factors in the closing.

Critics contend that with Ontario no longer paying hefty subsidies for green energy, and suspending large purchases of more power, such manufacturing jobs are threatened.

NOTE: Tickets to the luncheon are \$25 for chamber members and \$35 for non-members. They can be

purchased online at <http://web.peterboroughchamber.ca/events/Power-Lunch-with-the-Minister-of-Energy-588/details>.

-- with files from Postmedia Network

T B News Watchletter to the Editor: Energy Minister responds to

By: Minister Glenn Thibeault
July 24, 2017

<https://www.tbnewswatch.com/letters-to-the-editor/letter-to-the-editor-energy-minister-responds-to-brown-675705>

To the Editor:

Patrick Brown was in Thunder Bay (Monday) spreading false information and proving once again he has no real plan for Ontario's electricity sector. Ontarians deserve better than someone who opposes everything without offering a credible plan of their own.

It's also no surprise that Patrick Brown is opposed to green energy, as he was at pains to point out during his visit. After all, the Conservatives have always opposed our efforts to move our province away from dirty coal towards cleaner sources of energy. In 2014, we closed our last coal plant in Ontario, marking the completion of the biggest climate change initiative ever undertaken in North America. And yet despite the air we breathe now being cleaner and our electricity system being more reliable than ever, Patrick Brown continues to treat green energy as a boogeyman.

The sad part is that while the Conservatives continue making these wild claims about the electricity sector, they have no plan of their own. Worse, they voted against Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan. This plan is reducing bills by 25 per cent on average, in part by spreading our investments over a longer time period, more fairly sharing the costs among all those who will benefit. Yet the Conservatives opposed this plan as well, going so far as to vote against this relief for Ontarians. That means they voted "no" to a 25 per cent on average reduction on bills for every household in the province, along with as many as half a million small businesses and farms, "no" to savings of up to 40-50 per cent for rural, remote, or low-income families, and "no" to our plan to hold rates to inflation for four years.

Given Patrick Brown's track record, it should come as no surprise that he repeatedly refuses to offer anything of substance. Nonetheless, it's disappointing – Ontarians deserve better.

Glenn Thibeault
Ontario Minister of Energy

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