Morning Media Scan: Hydro Rate Reduction Plan - June 28, 2017

From: Electronic Media <cab.emedia@ontario.ca>

To: "@OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management" <opo-mediarelationsandissuesmgmt@msgov.gov.on.ca>, "Bevan, Andrew (OPO)" <andrew.bevan@ontario.ca>, "McEachern, Gillian (OPO)" <gillian.mceachern@ontario.ca>, "Donelson, Philip (OPO)" <philip.donelson@ontario.ca>, "Bossin, Bryan (OPO)" <bryan.bossin@ontario.ca>, "Tomney, Genevieve (OPO)" <genevieve.tomney@ontario.ca>, "Jancik, Mike (OPO)" <mike.jancik@ontario.ca>, "@CAB-Trans CO" <cab-transco@msgov.gov.on.ca>, "Baker, Carys (ENERGY)" <carys.baker@ontario.ca>, "Berry, James (ENERGY)" <james.berry5@ontario.ca>, "Bodrug, Andrew (ENERGY)" <andrew.bodrug@ontario.ca>, "Campbell, David (ENERGY)" <david.campbell2@ontario.ca>, "Coker, Meaghan (ENERGY)" <meaghan.coker@ontario.ca>, "Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY)" <kevin.denheijer@ontario.ca>, "Esdaile, Trevor (ENERGY)" <trevor.esdaile@ontario.ca>, "Festeryga, Katherine (ENERGY)" <katherine.festeryga@ontario.ca>, "Foster, David (ENERGY)" <david.foster@ontario.ca>, "McGrath, Jessica (ENERGY)" <jessica.mcgrath@ontario.ca>, "Moseley-Williams, Kate (ENERGY)" <kate.moseley-williams@ontario.ca>, "Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)" <colin.nekolaichuk@ontario.ca>, "Olsheski, Mark (ENERGY)" <mark.olsheski@ontario.ca>, "Ramasra, Raynier (ENERGY)" <raynier.ramasra@ontario.ca>, "Ruttan, Craig (ENERGY)" <craig.ruttan@ontario.ca>, "Teliszewsky, Andrew (ENERGY)" <andrew.teliszewsky@ontario.ca>, "Thompson, Rachel (ENERGY)" <rachel.thompson@ontario.ca>, "Tresise, Landon (ENERGY)" <landon.tresise@ontario.ca>, "Tretiakov, Ilia (ENERGY)" <ilia.tretiakov@ontario.ca>, "Walman, Evan (ENERGY)" <evan.walman@ontario.ca>, "An, Derrick (OPO)" <derrick.an@ontario.ca>, "Leisk, Madison (OPO)" <madison.leisk@ontario.ca>, "Porter, Maddy (OPO)" <maddy.porter@ontario.ca>

Cc: "Sumi, Craig (CAB)" <craig.sumi@ontario.ca>, "Di Giovanni, Robert (CAB)" <robert.digiovanni@ontario.ca>, "Law, Sally (CAB)" <sally.law@ontario.ca>, "Stinson, Jeffrey (CAB)" <jeffrey.stinson@ontario.ca>, "Nutter, George (ENERGY)" <george.nutter@ontario.ca>, "Halford, Gavin (ENERGY)" <gavin.halford@ontario.ca>, "Ma, Cesue (CAB)" <cesue.ma@ontario.ca>, Electronic Media <cab.emedia@ontario.ca>

Date: Wed, 28 Jun 2017 09:00:18 -0400

Attachments: 20170628 - Media Scan - Hydro Rate Reduction (Morning Scan).doc (91.14 kB)

Morning Media Scan: June 28 2017

MEDIA SCAN: HYDRO RATE REDUCTION PLAN

June 28, 2017

Click links below to view article:

Print Coverage

- **Orillia Packet & Times: Timing of Hydro One's rate hike request suspect; A4; 2017.06.28**
- **Tillsonburg News: Timing of Hydro One's rate hike request suspect; A4; 2017.06.28**
- **Northern Daily News (Kirkland Lake): Timing of Hydro One's rate hike request suspect; A4; 2017.06.28**

Print Coverage

Orillia Packet & Times: Timing of Hydro One's rate hike request suspect; A4; 2017.06.28

PUBLICATION:	Orillia Packet & Times
PAGE:	A4
DATE:	2017.06.28
SECTION:	Opinion
EDITION:	Final
BYLINE:	Jim Merriam
SOURCE:	Orillia Packet & Times
KEYWORDS:	hydro,beyond,belief,utility,audacity,distribution
WORD COUNT:	537

Timing of Hydro One's rate hike request suspect

If Hydro One weren't Hydro One, it would be beyond belief that the utility would have the audacity to seek a hike in distribution rates in 2017.

In the recent past, the utility and the provincial government have endured withering attacks over the costs of electricity in Ontario.

The protests have covered power poverty in the province, indefensible prices for delivery even when no power is used, huge salaries for the top dogs at Hydro One, the unconscionable sell-off of portions of the utility by Premier Kathleen Wynne's government to private interests.

In the face of all that, Hydro One is seeking a hike in distribution rates.

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB)is holding hearings on the rate request and it's here that things get weird.

In a June 6 new release from Hydro One, in response to notices to customers sent by the OEB, the utility says it's "committed to reducing costs and increasing the company's productivity and efficiency. The rate application reflects this commitment and is based on a plan that includes making only the necessary improvements to ensure the reliable supply of electricity."

Translation: We want you to pay more so we can deliver cheaper power sometime in the future. We're from Hydro One and we're here to help. Trust us.

In reality, the utility is working on improving profits by increasing costs to its customers. Once again, we're off down the rabbit hole.

However, an Ontario Energy Board (OEB) spokesperson is quoted as saying: "Any amounts approved by the OEB will not impact the distribution line of the bill of most Hydro One customers, after the Fair Hydro Act credits and changes are applied."

Translation: The government has a plan to borrow from your grandchildren to make sure you pay less for electricity today. So, we are free to approve a higher rate, because you won't notice it. Overall, you'll still pay less. Trust us.

Where is the entrance to that rabbit hole again? The comments from the OEB came in answer to questions about whether the public consultations really meant anything or if they were just window dressing, with decisions already made.

The spokesperson said customer input, intervenors and OEB staff members each have great weight when

considering if a requested rate increase is reasonable.
Part of the exercise is to assure customers "there's a regulator that's watching out for them as well."
In the real world, any regulator worth the name would just say no to a rate hike request in 2017. I'm just saying.
We all know that the government's so-called Fair Hydro Act should be renamed the Hydro Credit Card Act, because the piper will have to be paid. And the bill will come due some years down the road.
Both Hydro One and the OEB seem to hope we ignore the non-partisan provincial financial accountability officer. That report says the net result of the Fair Hydro Act will mean future ratepayers will have to come up with an additional $21 billion to play catch up.
So here we have two entities supported by the public purse claiming consumers won't feel jacked up prices, because the government is already pretending to bring prices down.
Can anyone say, collusion?
jimmerriam@hotmail.com

Tillsonburg News: Timing of Hydro One's rate hike request suspect; A4; 2017.06.28

PUBLICATION:	Tillsonburg News
PAGE:	A4
DATE:	2017.06.28
SECTION:	Opinion
EDITION:	Final
BYLINE:	Jim Merriam
SOURCE:	Tillsonburg News
KEYWORDS:	hydro,beyond,belief,utility,audacity,distribution
WORD COUNT:	537

Timing of Hydro One's rate hike request suspect

If Hydro One weren't Hydro One, it would be beyond belief that the utility would have the audacity to seek a hike in distribution rates in 2017.
In the recent past, the utility and the provincial government have endured withering attacks over the costs of electricity in Ontario.
The protests have covered power poverty in the province, indefensible prices for delivery even when no power is used, huge salaries for the top dogs at Hydro One, the unconscionable sell-off of portions of the utility by Premier Kathleen Wynne's government to private interests.
In the face of all that, Hydro One is seeking a hike in distribution rates.
The Ontario Energy Board (OEB)is holding hearings on the rate request and it's here that things get weird.
In a June 6 new release from Hydro One, in response to notices to customers sent by the OEB, the utility says it's "committed to reducing costs and increasing the company's productivity and efficiency. The rate application reflects this commitment and is based on a plan that includes making only the necessary improvements to ensure the reliable supply of electricity."
Translation: We want you to pay more so we can deliver cheaper power sometime in the future. We're from Hydro One and we're here to help. Trust us.
In reality, the utility is working on improving profits by increasing costs to its customers. Once again, we're off down the rabbit hole.
However, an Ontario Energy Board (OEB) spokesperson is quoted as saying: "Any amounts approved by the OEB will not impact the distribution line of the bill of most Hydro One customers, after the Fair Hydro Act credits and changes are applied."
Translation: The government has a plan to borrow from your grandchildren to make sure you pay less for electricity today. So, we are free to approve a higher rate, because you won't notice it. Overall, you'll still pay less. Trust us.

Where is the entrance to that rabbit hole again? The comments from the OEB came in answer to questions about whether the public consultations really meant anything or if they were just window dressing, with decisions already made.
The spokesperson said customer input, intervenors and OEB staff members each have great weight when considering if a requested rate increase is reasonable.
Part of the exercise is to assure customers "there's a regulator that's watching out for them as well."
In the real world, any regulator worth the name would just say no to a rate hike request in 2017. I'm just saying.
We all know that the government's so-called Fair Hydro Act should be renamed the Hydro Credit Card Act, because the piper will have to be paid. And the bill will come due some years down the road.
Both Hydro One and the OEB seem to hope we ignore the non-partisan provincial financial accountability officer. That report says the net result of the Fair Hydro Act will mean future ratepayers will have to come up with an additional $21 billion to play catch up.
So here we have two entities supported by the public purse claiming consumers won't feel jacked up prices, because the government is already pretending to bring prices down.
Can anyone say, collusion?
jimmerriam@hotmail.com
====

Northern Daily News (Kirkland Lake): Timing of Hydro One's rate hike request suspect; A4; 2017.06.28

PUBLICATION:	Northern Daily News (Kirkland Lake)
PAGE:	A4
DATE:	2017.06.28
SECTION:	Opinion
EDITION:	Final
BYLINE:	Jim Merriam
SOURCE:	Northern Daily News (Kirkland Lake)
KEYWORDS:	hydro,beyond,belief,utility,audacity,distribution
WORD COUNT:	537

Timing of Hydro One's rate hike request suspect

If Hydro One weren't Hydro One, it would be beyond belief that the utility would have the audacity to seek a hike in distribution rates in 2017.
In the recent past, the utility and the provincial government have endured withering attacks over the costs of electricity in Ontario.
The protests have covered power poverty in the province, indefensible prices for delivery even when no power is used, huge salaries for the top dogs at Hydro One, the unconscionable sell-off of portions of the utility by Premier Kathleen Wynne's government to private interests.
In the face of all that, Hydro One is seeking a hike in distribution rates.
The Ontario Energy Board (OEB)is holding hearings on the rate request and it's here that things get weird.
In a June 6 new release from Hydro One, in response to notices to customers sent by the OEB, the utility says it's "committed to reducing costs and increasing the company's productivity and efficiency. The rate application reflects this commitment and is based on a plan that includes making only the necessary improvements to ensure the reliable supply of electricity."
Translation: We want you to pay more so we can deliver cheaper power sometime in the future. We're from Hydro One and we're here to help. Trust us.
In reality, the utility is working on improving profits by increasing costs to its customers. Once again, we're off down the rabbit hole.
However, an Ontario Energy Board (OEB) spokesperson is quoted as saying: "Any amounts approved by the OEB will not impact the distribution line of the bill of most Hydro One customers, after the Fair Hydro Act credits and changes are applied."
Translation: The government has a plan to borrow from your grandchildren to make sure you pay less for electricity today. So, we are free to approve a higher rate, because you won't notice it. Overall, you'll still

pay less. Trust us.
Where is the entrance to that rabbit hole again? The comments from the OEB came in answer to questions about whether the public consultations really meant anything or if they were just window dressing, with decisions already made.
The spokesperson said customer input, intervenors and OEB staff members each have great weight when considering if a requested rate increase is reasonable.
Part of the exercise is to assure customers "there's a regulator that's watching out for them as well."
In the real world, any regulator worth the name would just say no to a rate hike request in 2017. I'm just saying.
We all know that the government's so-called Fair Hydro Act should be renamed the Hydro Credit Card Act, because the piper will have to be paid. And the bill will come due some years down the road.
Both Hydro One and the OEB seem to hope we ignore the non-partisan provincial financial accountability officer. That report says the net result of the Fair Hydro Act will mean future ratepayers will have to come up with an additional $21 billion to play catch up.
So here we have two entities supported by the public purse claiming consumers won't feel jacked up prices, because the government is already pretending to bring prices down.
Can anyone say, collusion?
jimmerriam@hotmail.com