

TV Transcripts - Speech from the Throne

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Hydro Rebate Outlined in Speech From The Throne

Source: Global
Sep 12, 2016 5: 30 PM (1)

Anchor 1: We begin with your bank account this evening and how much money you're left with at the end of the month.

Anchor 2: Soaring hydro rates have hit families very hard in recent years. Today, the Wynne government moved to provide some relief, announced in the Speech from the Throne. But will it actually help your home finances?

Anchor 1: Christina Stevens is at Queen's Park with the answer to that. Christina, break all this down for us?

Reporter: Farah, today's Speech from the Throne is widely seen as an attempt by the Liberal government to hit the restart button. So in a way, it is really no surprise that they picked a hot button topic: Electricity. The speech started with the usual traditions, but the Liberals got to the heart of the matter fairly quickly. Soaring hydro costs coupled with this summer's heat wave added up to big bills. Responding to the complaints from consumers, the government is now offering up an 8 per cent rebate directly on residential electricity bills; essentially, the provincial tax portion of the HST. Small businesses are also eligible for this. The rebate goes into effect January 1.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario: Your government has listened to and has heard your concerns. It recognizes the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets.

Reporter: The opposition is calling to rebate a Band-Aid solution.

Patrick Brown, Ontario PC Leader: Let's be clear. Hydro rates are not going down. Today's Speech from the Throne does nothing to change the fact that by the government's own numbers between 2013 and 2018 hydro rates will go up by 42 per cent.

Reporter: There are also questions about just how much will you really save at the end of the month when you consider some increases in other parts of your bill. We will explain that at 6:00. Plus, another nugget for parents, a big announcement for child care.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Hydro Rebate, New Child Care Spaces Highlights of Speech From The Throne

Source: Global

Sep 12, 2016 6: 00 PM (11)

Anchor 1: A big day at Queen's Park. The Wynne Government delivering a throne speech, hoping to reset its agenda and regain some support before the next election.

Anchor 2: A big part of that reset is aimed at lowering hydro bills for struggling Ontario families. But tonight, two tough questions remain. First, how much are you actually going to save? And, how can the government afford it? Christina Stevens has our story.

Reporter: The Speech from the Throne. The Liberal Government's effort to spark enthusiasm by tackling soaring hydro rates with a rebate.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario: Your government will introduce legislation that would rebate directly on consumers' residential electricity bills an amount equal to the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax, an 8 per cent savings.

Reporter: The government says that totals a \$1 billion savings for Ontarians. But how have they scrounged up an extra billion dollars?

Glenn Thibeault, Minister of Energy: We are in a fiscal position now where we have been doing all of the heavy lifting over the last few years.

Reporter: You keep saying we've done the heavy lifting to find it, but from where specifically?

Minister Thibeault: I know public accounts will be showing all of that in the very near future and I believe Minister Sousa will be speaking to all of that.

Reporter: You must have some idea?

Thibeault: Minister Sousa will be speaking to that.

Reporter: Where is the money coming from specifically?

Charles Sousa, Minister of Finance: We are increasing supports for health care. We are increasing supports for education.

Reporter: How can you increase? Where is the money coming from?

Minister Sousa: We absolutely are increasing it. I identified in our fiscal plan. And coming shortly is going to be our public accounts illustrating the reporting of our accounting over the last year.

Reporter: Here's one way it could end up being a wash for some families. The rebate begins January 1, but also coming into effect in 2017 is cap and trade legislation which is expected to increase the price at the pump by 4.3 cents a litre and add about \$5 more to residential natural gas bills. But there's another nugget from the speech aimed at Ontario families, a plan to help create 100,000 new child care spaces over the next five years. But it won't come cheap.

Indira Naidoo-Harris, Associate Minister of Education: When it comes to operating costs, between \$600 to \$750 million, and when it comes to capital costs, between \$1 and \$3 billion.

Reporter: Still, the Liberals insist they're on track to deliver a balanced budget next year, keeping with their promise of eliminating the deficit by 2017-2018.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.
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Hydro Delivery Charges Impact Rural Ontarians

Source: Global
Sep 12, 2016 6: 02 PM (12)

Anchor: Global News has been documenting those struggling with high electricity bills for months. The problem is especially acute for customers in rural parts of Ontario. Electricity rates for everyone in the province have doubled in the past decade, but those living outside urban areas are really feeling the pain. The reason? Delivery charges on their hydro bills, which can be two to three times higher than for customers living in the city. Hydro One, which delivers power to much of rural Ontario, won't say how many people are being disconnected for not paying their bills. But between 2013 and 2014, the number of people applying for emergency provincial funding for electricity debts climbed by 20 per cent.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.
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Small Business Owner Speaks Out Over Hydro Costs

Source: Global
Sep 12, 2016 6: 03 PM (13)

Anchor: Hydro costs are also hurting small businesses. A Toronto couple runs a printing company in and they have even drastically changed their behaviour in order to lower the company's hydro bill. They say reducing rates should be the focus to relieve small businesses.

Sasha-Rose Dileo, Co-Owner, Alternative Imaging & Graphics Inc.: I would say about \$200 it's increased. Totally ridiculous. We're trying to earn a living here, we're trying to get business coming in and the more of the equipment we use, the higher the rates will go. So it just comes to a point but where you say to yourself, Is it worth running these machines and making no profit? Like, it just doesn't make any sense. Lights must be shut at all times. When the machines are not in use, power them down. Then, when you power them up, they take about 10 or 15 minutes to calibrate. So you're still wasting, but it doesn't make sense to keep the running all the time. So let's say my husband leaves the fan on in the bathroom, like shut the damn fan. It's like I'm constantly on his case, because I'm the one who pays the bills, not him. The last two years have been very hard, I would say the hardest I have ever experienced, and there were times when I look to my husband, said you know, it is just easier for you to work for someone else at a large corporation. You don't have to walk in and freeze in the winter, you don't have to walk in in the summer and be hot, and you know, you go home, there is a paycheque every two weeks and you go home. But when you are a small business owner and you've got bills like this, you can't. You go home stressed. You start to wonder, can I make the next bill? Can I get a paycheque? Can I make this payment? Can I make that payment? I hate saying this, but since the Liberals came in power, we live in fear both here at the office and at home. What's 8 per cent, \$20, \$30? She has got to do more than that, that's not good enough, she has got to lower these rates; 18 cents for hydro, a kilowatt, in Toronto is ridiculous – or in Ontario.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.
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Examining Newly Announced Ontario Hydro Rebate

Source: Global
Sep 12, 2016 6: 14 PM (16)

Anchor: You likely know by now that come January 1 you will see an 8 per cent cut in your hydro bill. That rebate announced in the throne speech by the Wynne government. Now, what you might not realize is

what else is coming January 1. That is when the effects of cap and trade come in. Gasoline is expected to go up by more than 4 cents a litre, plus it will cost more to heat your home with natural gas. But that is not what the Minister of Energy wants to talk about.

Reporter: If your hydro bill goes down, but your gas bill and your heating bill goes up, you still don't have any money.

Glenn Thibeault, Minister of Energy: So what we are talking about all along is that we are making sure that we're going to continue to find ways to have downward pressure on our rates. The cap and trade piece, we've said all along, isn't going to have any increases.

Anchor: So, even though your overall energy bill goes up, the government only wants to talk about that rebate you will get for electricity. Ok, fine. What about that rebate? It's the equivalent of the provincial portion of the HST, which means an 8 per cent cut to you bill. The government expects the average homeowner is going to save \$130 a year, more for people in rural areas. The cost of all of that? A billion of tax money. And this program is very similar to the Ontario Clean Energy Benefit, a 10 per cent rebate that expired only nine months ago. Part of the criticism of this kind of rebate is that it rewards consumption. For example, if I'm the kind of person who turns off the light every time I leave the room, and you are the kind of person whose home looks like this every Christmas, we both get the 8 per cent rebate. Your house looks nice, but I'm not sure my tax dollars should go towards you lighting up the neighbourhood. The other key point is, how will Ontario afford the extra billion dollars a year for the subsidy? The Liberals were warned about this four years ago. That is when economists Don Drummond warned of a coming "price shock" beginning in 2015 and told the government it should get rid of that 10 per cent clean energy subsidy because it is simply too expensive. Now, who can remember exactly what the Liberals were warned about four years ago? Well, I do. Here is my copy of the big book of Drummond, and right here on page 47, it says, "we worry that an extension of the clean energy benefit will risk Ontario's ability to return to a balanced budget."

Reporter: He warned your government not to reintroduce it or extend it because you wouldn't be able to make balance and now that is essentially exactly what you have done.

Charles Sousa, Minister of Finance: We are coming to balance. In fact, we are coming to balance well beyond his expectations as well.

Reporter: So you had an extra billion dollars just lying around?

Anchor: The Finance Minister isn't very forthcoming about where that billion dollars to pay for the rebate will come from, but insists his government can balance the books next year. All of this raises a central western about power and ratepayers? Ratepayers is a fancy way of saying people who use power. Should taxpayer money be used to subsidize a ratepayer bills? It is a question even the opposition likes to avoid.

Andrea Horwath, Ontario NDP Leader: I think that the families of this province need a break. I know that that's the case for sure...I think that the HST should be taken off the bills. I don't think HST should've been put on the bills in the first place.

Reporter: Do you believe fundamentally the taxes payer should subsidize ratepayers?

Patrick Brown, Ontario PC Leader: I think the best thing we can do rather than Band-Aid solutions or subsidies would be to change the failed policies.

Reporter: Could you answer my question, should taxpayers subsidize ratepayers?

Brown: I am not comfortable with any temporary solutions. Do I think is a good idea? Yeah, we have advocated before.

Anchor: So keep in mind, come January 1, 2017 when that rebate kicks in, that is still your money. And all parties at Queen's Park are willing to spend it to make hydro bills lower.

Anchor 2: A lot of non-answers coming from Queen's Park today.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Ontario Government Addresses Hydro Costs in Throne Speech

Source: Global

Sep 12, 2016 6: 30 PM (1)

Anchor: Global News first told you about hydro costs spinning out of control in Ontario. The growing bills forced some families to choose between heating their homes or putting food on the table. At the time, the Ontario government told Global News it wasn't a crisis. Well, it appears it's become a political crisis. The public outcry has prompted Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne to hit the reset button on her government's priorities, with hydro rebates now topping the agenda. As Eric Sorenson reports, it's a major flip-flop.

Reporter: If there was one reason for Ontario's Premier to summon the pomp and ceremony of a new throne speech, it was probably summed up in this phrase.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario: Your government has listened to and has heard your concerns. It recognizes that the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets.

Reporter: It has taken a while for the government to hear those concerns. Several Global News stories this summer uncovered the soaring costs of hydro to rural ratepayers in particular. At the time, the Minister of Energy denied it was a crisis.

Glenn Thibeault, Minister of Energy: While I'm still not using the word "crisis"...

Reporter: Indeed, a Global News freedom of information request asked for all correspondence between the Minister and the Ontario Energy Board on rural hydro rates, prices and charges since January 1. The reply, "The Ministry conducted a thorough search and no records were located in response to this request." That Ministry letter was dated August 26, and if the government wasn't getting a lot of feedback from the energy regulator on hydro rates, they were hearing about it on street. In this supposedly safe Scarborough riding one week later, the upstart Conservatives handed the government a stunning defeat. The Liberals conceded they took it on the chin partly over hydro rates. Ten days later, a normally vague throne speech got very specific in one area: Cash back for most electricity rate payers.

Dowdeswell: The rebate would go into effect on January 1, 2017.

Reporter: The average Ontario household will get a rebate of about \$130 next year, and hard-hit eligible rural customers will get about \$540 in additional savings. Seems like it was a crisis after all.

Minister Thibeault: We recognize that many of our families and some businesses are having a difficult time with electricity bills, and so we thought it was paramount to ensure that we find ways to help them.

Patrick Brown, Ontario PC Leader: It shows how out of touch this government is when pressing the reset button means actually listening to what Ontarians and the opposition have been telling them for years.

Reporter: The Wynne government's popularity has fallen and this analyst says she's trying to turn that around.

Wayne Petrozzi, Political Analyst: Get themselves back on the rail, put themselves in a position where they can about before and electorate and get themselves re-elected.

Reporter: Today's throne speech was followed by one other formality, the swearing in of the new member from Scarborough, a stinging symbol for the Liberals who are now down a seat heading towards the next election. Eric Sorenson, Global News, Toronto.

Anchor: So will Kathleen Wynne's promised tax break do anything in the long run? We explore that on our website, globalnews.ca/globalnational.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Child Care Spaces, Math Education Highlighted in Ontario Throne Speech

Source: Global

Sep 12, 2016 6: 33 PM (2)

Anchor: In today's throne speech, the Ontario government also promised to create 100,000 new child care spaces over five years starting in 2017. That would create spots for about 40 per cent of children aged

four and under. In an effort to boost declining test scores, more math teachers are promised for elementary schools.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Throne Speech Promises Some Relief for High Hydro Bills

Source: CFTO

Sep 12, 2016 6: 05 PM (3)

Anchor 1: The Ontario government is reducing your hydro bills by 8%.

Anchor 2: It's among the promises in today's Throne Speech. Which reads a little bit like an election platform. CTV's Paul Bliss is at Queen's Park. Paul, how is this going to help families?

Reporter: Well, the rebates will start showing up on your hydro bill in January, likely to be very visible for you to see, unlike the carbon tax which is going to be hidden in your home heating bill. The government wants you to see this one. All the pomp and ceremony and some big news for Ontario families. Lieutenant-Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell delivers the Wynne government makeover, a change of direction that cuts your hydro bills.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant-Governor: Your government has listened to and has heard your concerns. It recognizes that the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets.

Reporter: It reduces your cost by 8 percent with a rebate directly on your bill, an amount equal to the provincial portion of the HST. The average annual savings: \$130. But rural customers facing higher prices will save a \$540 a year under the plan. The government says it's heard your complaints and now it feels your pain on hydro bills. With an election less than two years away, it's a very political move, and a very strategic one. The critics are lining up. In fact, one of the largest public sector unions in Ontario says the Premier needs the boot, not a reboot.

Smokey Thomas, OPSEU: The solution would be -- I thought they should have quit and called an election and actually got a real mandate from the people of Ontario.

Reporter: The Conservatives and NDP quick to point out the Premier's awakening comes right after her party lost one of their strongholds in a Toronto by-election.

Patrick Brown, PC Leader: But when this government loses a third consecutive by-election in a riding that was a Liberal fortress, held for over 20 years, now it's a crisis.

Andrea Horwath, NDP Leader: My message to the Premier is this. Just take the HST off of hydro already! Once and for all. Just do it! Get it over with!

Reporter: The throne speech also promising 100,000 new licenced childcare spaces for children under four. Well, and to pay for the 8 percent cut to your hydro bill, the Finance Minister is taking \$1 billion from general revenue. He says don't worry about it, there's enough money and he's still on target to get rid of the deficit by 2017-18. I'm Paul Bliss.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Province Says Cap and Trade Will Not Impact Hydro Rebate

Source: City

Sep 12, 2016 6: 00 PM (1)

Reporter: You could call it a sales pitch today from the throne speech at Queen's Park. Your hydro bill is going to get a \$130 rebate next year. In reality though, your wallet will probably see very little difference. Today's throne speech was designed to ease the sticker shock over hydro rates. They've become the Liberal government's Achilles heel and today it tried to do damage control, announcing an 8 per cent rebate on hydro bills. That will save the average home \$130 a year, significantly more for rural and northern areas. It goes into effect January 1...but wait. That's the same day you'll start paying for cap and trade. It's expected to cost the average home owner an extra \$13 a month for home heating and to fill up the car, but the Energy Minister denies the savings from the hydro rebate will be voided by the cost of cap

and trade.

Glenn Thibeault, Minister of Energy: What we are talking about all along is that we are making sure that we're going to continue to find ways to have downward pressure on our rates.

Reporter: The hydro rebate will take \$1 billion a year out of provincial coffers, a hefty price tag to try and soften the growing anger over the growing price of electricity in the province. The move comes on the heels of a stinging defeat when the Wynne government lost a long time Liberal seat to the Conservatives in this month's byelection in Scarborough-Rouge River.

Patrick Brown, Ontario PC Leader: It's too little. It's too late. And that's why I call it the Raymond Cho hydro benefit, because it's only because of this byelection loss that they're trying to protect their own member.

Reporter: The Finance Minister maintains the loss and plummeting Liberal polls aren't the reason for this new hydro rebate.

Reporter: When you say that this is months in the making, are you saying that the low polls and the loss in the byelection had nothing to do with this 8 per cent rebate?

Charles Sousa, Minister of Finance: The Premier has been discussing this for some time.

Tom Adams, Electricity Consultant: The entire power system, every component of your power bill is ripping you off.

Reporter: Tom Adams is an electricity consultant. He says Ontario pays more for hydro than any other province except PEI and forks out about double what BC, Manitoba and Quebec pay.

Adams: Ontario's got a really scrambled electricity system. We are producing way too much power. We're paying customers to not consume power at the same time as we're paying generators to not produce power. There's no end in sight. We're on track for much higher rates than we've got today.

Reporter: Now, Tom Adams says Ontario hydro customers have seen their rates go up about 8 per cent every year since 2009. He says if all these changes go through as promised, we will see a bit of a break, but it won't last long because he's expecting another rate increase come May. Now for your information, by the way, the Liberals maintain they will still balance the books as promised in 2017, even with the extra cost of this hydro rebate which will cost \$1 billion.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Political Strategist Jim Warren Discusses Throne Speech

Source: City

Sep 12, 2016 6: 23 PM (11)

Reporter: The Liberal government is back at work with a new session today. We've been telling you how they want you to resent your hydro bill a little bit less every time you open it. They held their throne speech today as the legislature resumed, but it felt more like the start of an election campaign. One of the key announcements? The Liberals are giving homeowners an 8 per cent rebate on their hydro bill. I spoke to political strategist Jim Warren about the pitch.

Reporter: What are the politics behind all of what we're seeing at Queen's Park right now?

Jim Warren, Political Strategist: This is the premier hitting control-alt-delete. It's a reset of what the narrative of the government is, the communications strategy and everything the government wants to you know about what they're doing. This is a way for them to start all over again, to have a do-over to try and set the stage for the next election.

Reporter: Wipe the slate clean?

Warren: That's the idea, and so usually any government whether it's Liberal, Conservative, in the first two years of a mandate they do all the nasty things that need to get done, in the last two years they do things to try and make sure you want to have them back again. They prorogued in the traditional sense, not the bad sense Dalton McGuinty and Stephen Harper did, but in the proper sense, which is it's time to tell a new story and get them to sort of change the channel so you'll listen to something new from Kathleen Wynne.

Reporter: In my earlier story I say that I think the hydro, the cost of hydro is their Achilles heel. Will doing

an 8 per cent rebate have any impact when cap and trade is coming in at exactly the same time?

Warren: It is going to be a big huge issue in the next election and it's not something that they can undo. So this government from Dalton McGuinty, Kathleen Wynne they've made the environment a priority and they've really been telling a story about the benefits. So if you look across the way you can see clearer skies, but, however, there's a lot more money coming out of your pocketbook and that's what people really care about when they vote.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Province Announces Hydro Rebate in Throne Speech

Source: CJOH

Sep 12, 2016 6: 00 PM (1)

Anchor: Good evening. It's supposed to be a new beginning for the provincial government, but Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals are trying to tackle an old problem. Electricity bills that are sky high and seem to be wildly out of control. A top priority as the legislature returns. Slicing 8 percent off your bill, equaling part of the HST. Saving the average Ontario household about \$130 a year. Rural customers will save even more. Up to \$540 a year. CTV's Catherine Lathem with what this hydro rebate could mean for your budget. Cathy.

Reporter: Well, Graham, the Liberals say they are listening to Ontarians and now they are acting, and putting a little more money in the pockets of homes and small business owners. Some say the rebate comes far too late. Ottawa's Saslove's meat market has been in the meat business for 62 years, and just as important as the right cut of beef, keeping it at the right temperature.

John Diener, Saslove's Meat Market: Hydro is a big part of the business.

Reporter: The price of that hydro enough to give you chills. Owner John Diener has been tracking it for years. In 2003, he says the market's hydro bill, \$20,000. This year, so far, \$55,000. And it keeps going up.

Diener: I looked at it 3 years ago. You can see I did the chart up to 2013. It was at that time we were trying to decide how much longer we could stay in business if hydro keeps escalating at the rate it was.

Reporter: Kathleen Wynne's government promising today to help Ontarians like Diener.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant-Governor: Your government has listened to and has heard your concerns.

Reporter: In the throne speech, an announcement of a hydro rebate. Starting January 1st, an 8 percent rebate equivalent to the province's portion of the HST. Working out to average \$130 per year per Ontario household. If you live in the country, a larger rebate. \$540 per home each year. Small businesses would also be eligible. Opposition parties calling it a band-aid solution.

Patrick Brown, PC Leader: If the government was really committed to dealing with the crisis, they would say we're not going to sign any more contracts for energy we don't need. We are not gonna pursue the fire sale of Hydro One.

Andrea Horwath, NDP Leader: I'm happy for the families of Ontario, if they can actually get a bit of a break on the hydro bill. But the Liberals have done the wrong thing. They should permanently put the HST off the hydro bill.

Reporter: Saslove's Meat Market says the rebate is long overdue.

Diener: I did the analysis 3 years ago meant it's a problem back then. Yes, they are late to the game.

Reporter: High electricity, as he says, is an old problem, but the Liberals had no option but to make a move now. The election is just 2 years ago away, and with hydro such a hot button issue, they can now say they tried to do something to ease the pain. The question is will that be enough?

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Liberals Throne Speech Emphasizes Balancing Budget, Child Care Spaces

Source: CHCH
Sep 12, 2016 6: 00 PM (1)

Anchor: Balancing the books, job creation, improved child care and preserving the environment. Those are some of the goals the Liberals set for themselves to open up the fall session today during their throne speech. Here's a portion.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Ontario Lieutenant Governor: It is a plan to build Ontario up in a way that is responsible and sustainable, both financially and environmentally. Three years ago, your government recommitted to eliminating the deficit by 2017, '18. It will make good on this commitment. Next year's budget will be a balanced budget.

Anchor: The Liberals are coming off a less than favourable summer and the opposition was quick to pick apart what they heard and did not hear from the throne this afternoon. Lisa Hephner was at Queen's Park gathering reaction to the throne speech. We are joined in studio with more.

Reporter: When the government prorogued parliament last week, there were hints they would come back today with a throne speech that gives Ontarians a break on hydro bills. That has been a sore point for voters, driven home recently when the Liberals lost a byelection in Scarborough, even though during the lead-up to the byelection, the PC leader Patrick Brown had to apologize and retract a letter that said he would scrap the new sex ed curriculum. According to reaction at Queen's Park, today announcement will not bring the uptick in popularity the Liberals had been hoping for.

Reporter: The hydro tax cut was expected. The extra child care spaces, less so. But after Elizabeth Dowdeswell's speech from the throne...

Warren "Smokey" Thomas, OPSEU president: It is all just a shell game. It is all just smoke and mirrors. I am not impressed at all.

Christine Van Geyn, Canadian Taxpayers Federation: The government's policy has created a situation where hydro bills are growing an average of 8 percent a year. So this isn't a long-term solution. What will they do next year?

Reporter: Critics say the government should get out of 20-year contracts with private wind and solar companies in order to solve the problem of skyrocketing electricity costs. They say removing the provincial 8 percent tax does nothing.

Van Geyn: The same day that the rebate is coming into effect, the government's policy of a new cap-and-trade tax will see your home heating bill go up.

Glenn Thibeault, Ministry of Energy: When we are talking about electricity prices, specifically, that is what I am here to talk about, we are seeing those specific reductions happening right now.

Reporter: IT was Andrea Horwath of the provincial NDP that first proposed taking HST off hydro bills. But the 8 percent reduction announced today has not appeased opponents.

Andrea Horwath, Ontario NDP leader: People are going to have to wait for four more months. That raises a lot of questions about how long this rebate will last, and how exactly it will work.

Patrick Brown, Ontario PC leader: Too little, too late. It is simply a Band-Aid solution for Liberal mistakes.

Reporter: The government says it has the billion dollars it will spend on the rebates.

Minister Thibeault: That is specifically related to all of the heavy lifting we have done over the last years to make sure we can balance the books.

Reporter: Political scientist Nelson Wiseman was surprised the Liberals expect to balance the budget.

Nelson Wiseman, U of T political scientist: The problem is they've been in power so long and people don't respond to what you have done. Look, Harper finally balanced the budget after 6, 7 years of running deficits. What did it do for him last year?

Reporter: Less clear today were details about the 100,000 new child care spaces or how those will roll out. We heard it would be between \$600 and \$750 million but it was unclear then whether that includes capital and operating costs. Details will be revealed in coming days according to the Finance Minister today. Will

these measures help the Liberals? The test will be two more by-elections. Those are coming up, including Tim Hudak's riding of Niagara-West Glanbrook. He has held that for the Conservatives since 1995. Phil.

Anchor: Thank you very much.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Some Small Businesses Owners Say Hydro Reduction Not Enough

Source: CHCH

Sep 12, 2016 6: 04 PM (2)

Anchor: Small businesses are reacting to the slight drop in hydro prices set to start in January. As Kate Carnegie reports, some say the 8 percent decrease will not make much of a difference.

Reporter: Brandon Stanicak owns the West Town Bar and Grill in Hamilton. From the multiple fridges and ovens , to the beer taps, air conditioning, signs and TVs, it costs a lot to run the place

Brandon Stanicak: June was a record-setting bill for us at over \$5,000. It was shocking and then we -- in July it was over \$7,000.

Reporter: The Liberals say they understand.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Ontario Lieutenant Governor: It recognizes the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets.

Reporter: So it is cutting 8 percent from your bill starting January. When you do the math, an 8 percent decrease on your bill will save the average Ontario household about \$130. Small businesses also qualify for the rebate but say it is just not enough.

Stanicak: Our hydro payment is one of our biggest payments now. It is bigger than a mortgage payment.

Reporter: His hydro bill has already gone up \$1,000 since last year.

Stanicak: 8 percent, roughly \$560. So we are still at a \$6,500 hydro bill for a 100-seat restaurant.

Reporter: Down the street, Tony Greco is also frustrated with his monthly bill.

Tony Greco, Mr. Tony's Hair Design: The last bill, 250. That's a lot of money for a small business. Trying to survive, trying to make a living.

Reporter: That is up over \$100 since June. Greco remembers the days when his hydro bill was only \$15.

Reporter: When was that?

Greco: '66, '67.

Reporter: The barbershop owner does the best he can to save money by turning off the air when he is closed and shutting off the lights when a client is not in the chair.

Greco: Every penny counts when you are in business.

Reporter: He said the government should have cut prices by 20 percent to even make a difference on the bills. And rural rate-payers who cannot take advantage of the inexpensive natural gas for heating like we can here in the city, will receive a \$45 a month discount which over a year's period equals \$540.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Government To Deliver 8 Per Cent Rebate On Hydro Bills

Source: CFPL

Sep 12, 2016 6:09 PM (7)

Anchor: Ontario consumers will get some relief from sky rocketing electricity rates under a Liberal

government initiative to remove the provincial portion of the HST. Now the Liberals announced the plan today in the Throne Speech opening the fall session of the Ontario legislature. Paul Bliss has more.

Reporter: All the pomp and ceremony and some big news for Ontario families. Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell delivers the Wynne government makeover, a change in direction that cuts your Hydro bills.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Ontario Lieutenant Governor: Your government has listened to and has heard your concerns. It recognizes that the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets.

Reporter: It reduces your cost by 8 percent with a rebate directly on your bill, an amount equal to the provincial portion of the HST. The average annual savings \$130, but rural customers facing higher prices will save \$540 a year under the plan. The government says it has heard your complaints and now it feels your pain on Hydro bills. With an election less than two years away, it's a very political move and a very strategic one. The critics are lining up. In fact, one of the largest public sector unions in Ontario says the Premier needs the boot, not a reboot.

Warren "Smokey" Thomas: OPSEU President: The solution would be -- anyway, I thought that she should have quit and called an election and actually got a real mandate from the people of Ontario.

Reporter: The Conservatives and NDP quick to point out the Premier's awakening comes right after its party lost one of their strongholds in a Toronto by-election.

Patrick Brown, Ontario PC Leader: But when this government loses a third consecutive by-election in a riding that was a Liberal fortress held for over 20 years, now it's a crisis.

Andrea Horwath, Ontario NDP Leader: My message to the Premier is this: Just take the HST off of Hydro, already. Once and for all. Just do it. Get it over with.

Reporter: The Throne Speech also promising \$100,000 new licensed child care spaces for children under four. Paul Bliss, CTV news.

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Government Lays Out Their Plan For the Province During Throne Speech

Source: CBC

Sep 12, 2016 6:03 PM (2)

Anchor: Premier Kathleen Wynne and her government have laid out their plan for the province for the next two years in the throne speech this afternoon. Here's what the Liberals are promising: An 8 percent hydro rebate on electricity bills. That's estimated to save the average family about \$130 a year but cost the government a billion a year. Meanwhile, 100,000 new child-care spaces are to be created in the next five years. The Liberals also promised to balance the province's budget by next year. Michelle Chung looks in depth at those promises and more, also, how your taxes will pay for this.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario: Your government has listened to and has heard your concerns. It recognizes that the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets.

Reporter: The Liberals say there's relief coming. Starting next year, families and small businesses will be getting a rebate of \$130 a year on their electricity bill, about equivalent to the H.S.T. on your bill. For rural residents, a bigger rebate that amounts to about \$540 a year.

Minister Glenn Thibeault: We thought it was paramount to ensure that we find ways to help them, and today, this is a meaningful savings for many families.

Reporter: Households have seen a 57 percent jump in the cost of electricity in the past decade. Two weeks ago, the Tories unseated the Liberals in Scarborough-Rouge River. Progressive Conservative Leader Patrick Brown says the cost of electricity was the number-one issue.

PC Leader Patrick Brown: Where was this government when the news came out that the number of Hydro One customers who are unable to pay their bills increased by 150 percent within a one-year period? When this government loses a third-consecutive by-election in a riding that was a Liberal fortress held for over 20 years, now it's a crisis.

Reporter: Today the Liberals also promised to create 100,000 new daycare spots over the next five years. But most critics were focused on hydro rates and whether the province was going to ensure voters were going to be able to pay their bills in the future.

Christine Van Geyn – Canadian Taxpayers Federation: The government needed to address the root causes of soaring hydro rates and they haven't done that today. What they need to repeal the Green Energy Act, to stop signing renewable contracts.

Reporter: The Liberals are not backing down from the green energy plan and they are hoping today's reset and hydro rebate will give them the boost they need with voters as they look ahead to the provincial election in two years. Michelle Chung, CBC news, Toronto.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Hydro Rebate May Not Help Struggling Toronto Family

Source: CBC

Sep 12, 2016 6:40 PM (15)

Anchor: We want to take you back to the details of the throne speech from the Wynne government, removing the provincial portion of the H.S.T. that adds up to an 8 percent savings. We spent time with a family who, that 8 percent could make a big difference. But will it?

Reporter: What's the feeling you have, you know, just before you're going to open up your hydro bill?

Bryant Didier, Musician: Slight dread.

Reporter: But the levity soon turns more serious with, hydro bills rising, Brian's account is in arrears to the tune of \$2,000 and it could get worse fast.

Bryant Didier, Musician: If this remains unpaid, your services will be disconnected. They're threatening to cancel my services if I don't pay \$863 within 10 days.

Reporter: It's not a stretch for this musician to say life almost revolves around figuring out how to pay the hydro bill and raise two boys. In the winter, his bill can climb to \$500 a month.

Didier: I have to skip everything I shop at Value Village for them. I can't buy them new things as I'd like to. We're in a constant state of compromise.

Reporter: Didier makes a living as musician. He's one of countless hydro customers complaining about rising bills. Premier Kathleen Wynne says she's heard those complaints and in today's throne speech, made an effort to address them.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario: Your government will introduce legislation that would rebate directly on consumers' residential electricity bills, an amount equal to the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax, an 8 percent savings.

Reporter: That's estimated to save households \$130 a year but it doesn't give Didier reason to be optimistic. He's applied for low-income assistance offered by the government before without much success.

Didier: It's arduous. You know, you've got to provide months of income, statements, as well as ,banking statements, as well as every piece of I.D. for your children and yourself.

Reporter: Here is some perspective for you. All of that said, home energy costs in Ontario are actually lower than Alberta and all of the Atlantic provinces combined.

Anchor: There could be a catch. It seems the potential savings that the province is promising today may not actually amount to saves at all when you do the math.

Reporter: There is a little bit of math. I spoke to Tom Adams of Energy Probe who says any savings from that H.S.T. rebate will be clawed back by other increases. The H.S.T. Relief on hydro bills kicks in January 2017. That's also the same time that the province's cap-and-trade programme takes effect. It's

estimated that will add about \$5 a month to home heating bills. All told, that's over \$60 a year combined. When you combine that with upcoming rate increases for customers, in actual fact you are left with not much savings.

Anchor: Home owners are going to be excited about that.

Reporter: Quite the opposite.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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New Hydro Rebate Promises Delivered in the Throne Speech

Source: CKCO

Sep 12, 2016 6:08 PM (5)

Anchor: Your hydro bill will drop soon thanks to a new promise delivered in the provincial throne speech. Ontario's Lieutenant Governor delivered the speech today ushering in the fall session at Queen's Park. CTV's Abigail Bimman joins us and hydro rates are the key issues here.

Reporter: Meghan, the Liberals are promising to slash the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax come January but on the whole critics are calling it a rehash of old promises.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario: Next year's budget will be a balanced budget.

Reporter: Two years or halfway through the Liberal mandate Premier Kathleen Wynne said it's time to hit reset. It came in the form of prorogation and today a throne speech delivered by Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell promising relief for your hydro bills.

Dowdeswell: amount equal to the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax, an 8 percent savings.

Reporter: The government says that amounts to about \$130 a year for the average household.

Christine Van Geyn, Canadian Taxpayers Federation: The problem is removing the HST on bills that rise on average 8 percent a year. Really, that whole gain will be eaten up almost immediately.

Reporter: Other promises include 100,000 new child care space and a new emphasis on math skills after a very poor showing by Grade 6 students this year. Conservatives were happy about something else at Queen's Park today.

MPP Raymond Cho: I Raymond Cho do swear that I will be faithful --

MPP Michael Harris: Because of the byelection loss to Scarborough or in Toronto long-time Liberal-held riding now we're seeing traction and recognition from Kathleen Wynne that hydro rates are the highest in North America, that they're actually going to tackle them.

Reporter: Our region got one mention by name in the part of the speech that dealt with improvements coming to transit.

Dowdeswell: Light rapid transit systems will be built in Waterloo, Hamilton, Mississauga, Ottawa, and Toronto.

MPP Harris: We all know that regional taxpayers have been straddled with additional costs for LRT when communities like Hamilton, Mississauga and Brampton are getting 100 percent a full ride.

MPP Catherine Fife: There's always the talk of transit and they always talk about Waterloo. I mean Waterloo quite honestly is -- we're used to be talked about because a number of really amazing things are happening in our riding.

Reporter: NDP MPP Catherine Fife says she didn't hear much that was new today and her riding Waterloo has done well despite the Liberal government's transit portfolio. A note on hydro bill savings. For some in rural areas the discount is even higher -- 20 percent or \$540 a year.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Sault Ste. Marie Residents React To Hydro Rebate Announcement In Throne Speech

Source: MCTV

Sep 12, 2016 6:00 PM (1)

Anchor: Good evening. The Ontario government is giving the people 8 per cent break on their Hydro Bills. In the Speech from the Throne today, it was announced the province is spending a billion dollars to give people some relief from those rising prices. Here is CTV's Paul bliss.

Reporter: All the pomp and ceremony and some big news for Ontario families. Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell delivers the Wynne government makeover, a change in direction that cuts your Hydro bills.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Ontario Lieutenant Governor: Your government has listened to and has heard your concerns. It recognizes that the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets.

Reporter: It reduces your cost by 8 percent with a rebate directly on your bill, an amount equal to the provincial portion of the HST. The average annual savings \$130, but rural customers facing higher prices will save \$540 a year under the plan. The government says it has heard your complaints and now it feels your pain on Hydro bills. With an election less than two years away, it's a very political move and a very strategic one. The critics are lining up. In fact, one of the largest public sector unions in Ontario says the Premier needs the boot, not a reboot.

Warren "Smokey" Thomas: OPSEU President: The solution would be -- anyway, I thought that she should have quit and called an election and actually got a real mandate from the people of Ontario.

Reporter: The Conservatives and NDP quick to point out the Premier's awakening comes right after its party lost one of their strongholds in a Toronto by-election.

Patrick Brown, Ontario PC Leader: But when this government loses a third consecutive by-election in a riding that was a Liberal fortress held for over 20 years, now it's a crisis.

Andrea Horwath, Ontario NDP Leader: My message to the Premier is this: Just take the HST off of Hydro, already. Once and for all. Just do it. Get it over with.

Reporter: The Throne Speech also promising \$100,000 new licensed child care spaces for children under four. Paul Bliss, CTV news. Paul bliss CTV News, Queen's Park. Tony:

Anchor: And people are still did digesting the news of the rebates and calculating how it will affect their bills. Homeowners in the Sault offering their reaction today.

Unidentified Resident 1: It's ridiculously high even keeping the lights down and not using the hot water. It's like you're terrified to get your Hydro bill.

Unidentified Resident 2: Currently we find them absolutely ridiculous because we have a home and a cottage and every month rates just keep going up. And you're not using that much more power, you're trying to conserve, using the time of use wisely. We use the clothes line but the rates just keep going up.

Unidentified Resident 3: Well with that announcement you just indicated there, it's obviously a start but I think much more has to be done.

Tony: And the rebates begin January 1st. In our web poll question tonight do you think the Ontario Liberals are doing a good job? In our web poll question, you see it right there, go to northernontario.ctvnews.ca and cast your vote.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Government To Deliver 8 Per Cent Rebate On Hydro Bills

Source: CKVR

Sep 12, 2016 6:00 PM (1)

Anchor: Good evening. Thanks for joining us. Premier Kathleen Wynne says her government has a plan to help Ontarians deal with sky high electricity rates. It was the centrepiece of today's speech from the throne at Queen's Park. Starting January, customers will not have to pay the 8 percent provincial portion of the HST on hydro bills. And Wynne says there will be more help for rural customers too. Critics say it falls short of what's needed. With more on that and the rest of the government's to do list here is CTV's Paul Bliss.

Reporter: All the pomp and ceremony and some big news for Ontario families. Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell delivers the Wynne government makeover, a change in direction that cuts your Hydro bills.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Ontario Lieutenant Governor: Your government has listened to and has heard your concerns. It recognizes that the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets.

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Reporter: The Throne Speech also promising \$100,000 new licensed child care spaces for children under four. Paul Bliss, CTV news.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Province Promises Rebate To Address Rising Hydro Rates

Source: CKWS

Sep 12, 2016 6:00 PM (1)

Anchor: Good evening. Ontarians residents stung with rising Hydro bills are getting some relief from the province. Premier Wynne has promised to give homeowners and small businesses a rebate on the provincial portion of the HST.

Anchor: That will save a typical homeowner \$130 a year. Today's throne speech amounts to a reboot of the government's mandate in a bid to shore up popularity among voters. We have the latest from Queen's Park.

Reporter: All eyes are on the lieutenant governor as she delivered the speech from the throne.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Ontario Lieutenant Governor: Your government has heard and listened to your concerns.

Reporter: Outlining the government's priorities heading into the fall session.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Ontario Lieutenant Governor: It recognizes that the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets.

Reporter: As of January 1st, 2017, Ontario's 8 percent slice of the hst will be taken off of electricity bills, a savings of \$130 a year for the average household. The Liberal government also promised additional relief

for rural ratepayers, around 20 per cent or \$540 per year.

Unidentified Speaker: Anything would help right now.

Unidentified Speaker: It's a step in the right direction

Unidentified Speaker: Well, it could help but they need to do more because it is very high and it's a struggle for people to manage.

Reporter: This political analyst says homeowners want more relief.

Unidentified Speaker: I think it is going to be small comfort for a lot of Ontarians. The price of electricity has gone far more than 8 percent. While it's a start, it doesn't deal with the fundamental problem of why our electricity bills are so high and how the government has a plan as to whether or not they're going to actually fix root causes of this problem.

Reporter: The MPP for Chatham-Kent Essex agrees. Rick Nickels

MPP Rick Nicholls, Chatham-Kent Essex: It's a band-aid approach to a gash that requires sutures. The [inaudible] have increased by well over 70 percent in just five years. People are finding it almost impossible to pay their bills.

Reporter: But for some like business owner Ted Fairen at his gourmet butcher shop, an 8 percent reduction is a good start.

Unidentified Speaker: Super excited. It's like winning some money, so it's great. All the coolers, the freezers, the compressors, lightbulbs, everything in our store is all hydro.

Reporter: Fairen predicts he will save hundreds of dollars every month.

Unidentified Speaker: It will get the huge bill down a bit for us, which is always a blessing.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Kingston Officials And Residents React to the Throne Speech

Source: CKWS

Sep 12, 2016 6:03 PM (2)

Anchor: Lower electricity bills and more child care spaces might be a good political move, but how will that play out in Kingston. Some say today's throne speech is more of a band-aid.

Reporter: The mid-mandate throne speech rolled out Kathleen Wynne's plan to build the province up while helping Ontarians in their everyday lives — one of those measures includes the creation of new child care spaces.

Sophie Kiwala/MPP Kingston and the Islands: I'm very excited about the changes with respect to additional places for child care. There will be an additional 100 thousand licensed places within the next 5 years for the 0-4 age group.

Reporter: Another key piece of the Liberal plan is to introduce a Hydro rebate starting January 1st. While some hydro consumers find that saving 8% on the provincial portion of the HST is the better than nothing; others believe it's too little, too late."

Unidentified Speaker: No. 130 bucks a year doesn't amount to anything stacked up against the power costs and cost of living."

Unidentified Speaker: If they're going to cut down the hydro a little bit I am for it all."

Unidentified Speaker: I think it's good that she addressed it. But I hope she doesn't think that's the end of it because that's ridiculous.

Reporter: CEO of the Kingston Chamber of Commerce, Martin Sherris was pleased with the speech but

would have liked to see more done to offset other costs that will impact business development and small businesses, like impending carbon tax that will start next year. Sherris says hydro savings will help ...but at what cost?

Martin Sherris/CEO, Chamber of Commerce: Let's remember the flip side of the coin. It has to be paid for somehow. That somehow of 1.1 billion dollars will be taken out of the tax base. The money has to be generated to do that."

Reporter: The MPP for Prince Edward Hastings says it's not good policy, it's more about good politics.

Todd Smith, MPP of Prince Edward Hastings: Kathleen Wynne apparently doesn't care about lowering hydro bills when it's affecting your job. She's only interested in removing HST off the hydro bills when it might have a negative effect on her job. This isn't a solution to the problem. It's merely just a band-aid to get her through potentially a couple more by-elections or maybe even a general election.

Reporter: Mayor Bryan Paterson says the province's promise to continue to make historic infrastructure investments could be good news for big projects in Kingston like the proposed third crossing bridge.

Bryan Paterson/Mayor of Kingston: So to be able to get those positive signals from the province that this is something that's on their radar screen I think that that's a crucial step forward.

Reporter: Wynne says the government will continue to create economic growth and at the same time will be able to balance the budget in 2017-18.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Liberals Deliver Throne Speech That Plans to Reduce Hydro Bills, Increase Child Care Spaces

Source: CKPR

Sep 12, 2016 6: 00 PM (1)

Anchor: Good evening and thank you for joining us. The Wynne Government is moving to stem the tide of criticism that is growing over the high cost of electricity. In today's speech from the throne to launch the new session of the legislature, the government announced it will be rebating Ontario's 8 percent portion of the HST on electricity bills starting in January. The Liberals say the move will save the typical household about \$130 per year. But as Paul Bliss reports, taxpayers will still be on the hook for the billion dollars a year the subsidy will cost.

Reporter: All the pomp and ceremony and some big news for Ontario families. Lieutenant-Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell delivers the Wynne government makeover, a change of direction that cuts your hydro bills.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant-Governor: Your government has listened to and has heard your concerns. It recognizes that the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets.

Reporter: It reduces your cost by 8 percent with a rebate directly on your bill, an amount equal to the provincial portion of the HST. The average annual savings: \$130. But rural customers facing higher prices will save a \$540 a year under the plan. The government says it's heard your complaints and now it feels your pain on hydro bills. With an election less than two years away, it's a very political move, and a very strategic one. The critics are lining up. In fact, one of the largest public sector unions in Ontario says the Premier needs the boot, not a reboot.

Smokey Thomas, OPSEU: The solution would be -- I thought they should have quit and called an election and actually got a real mandate from the people of Ontario.

Reporter: The Conservatives and NDP quick to point out the Premier's awakening comes right after her party lost one of its strongholds in a Toronto by-election.

Patrick Brown, PC Leader: But when this government loses a third consecutive by-election in a riding that was a Liberal fortress held for over 20 years, now it's a crisis.

Andrea Horwath, NDP Leader: My message to the Premier is this. Just take the HST off of hydro already! Once and for all. Just do it! Get it over with!

Reporter: The throne speech also promising 100,000 new licenced childcare spaces for children under four. Paul Bliss, CTV news, Queen's Park.

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Power & Politics: Interview with Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault

Source: CBCNN

Sep 12, 2016 5:18 PM

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Ontario Lieutenant-Governor: Your government also intends to implement new measures to ensure that Ontario commercial and industrial ratepayers can also benefit from lower electricity costs.

Rosemary Barton, Host: The Ontario government making some big promises in its throne speech today, pretty expensive ones potentially too. Let's take a look at some of the highlights. People who live in cities in Ontario will get a rebate on their electricity costs, adding up to about \$130 bucks a year. For people in rural areas, the rebate will be much larger, about \$540 bucks a year. The government also promising to create 100,000 new child care spaces in the province over the next five years. But here's the question, how will they pay for it all? Joining me now from Toronto, Ontario's Minister of Energy Glenn Thibeault. Nice to see you, Minister.

Glenn Thibeault, Minister of Energy: Nice to see you, Rosie.

Rosemary: Obviously people were really concerned about the increased electricity rates. That's something I guess you're trying to address with this. How is a rebate, though, the answer to the problem that they're going to have to pay more on a monthly basis?

Minister Thibeault: Looking at the rebate, it's important for us to look at the whole picture. And for us as a government, we recognized and heard from people that the rates were a concern so we acted on that. But it took us a decade to ensure that we built a safe, reliable, and clean energy system, and today's announcement both will help families, small businesses, farms and our large industrial players right across our great province here in Ontario, and I think that was important for us to ensure that we brought forward these rebates to help them with their everyday costs.

Rosemary: A couple questions. You are also in the process of privatizing Hydro Ontario. How long will this rebate actually last as you sell bigger and bigger chunks of it?

Minister Thibeault: So, Hydro One is being broadened. We're broadening the sale of Hydro One, but these rebates are actually coming from two areas. So the first one, when you talked about the provincial rebate portion of the HST, that's coming from the tax base and that's ongoing. The second one is called the RRRP, the residential and remote community—and helps northern communities as well. We're actually supporting them by 20 percent. That comes from the rate base. So these are ongoing support rebate programs for families and businesses right across the province.

Rosemary: Okay, but if you are -- bear with me here. If you are continuing to privatize Hydro One -- excuse me, I called it Hydro Ontario -- Hydro One, you will have less revenue coming in from that as a source of revenue. I don't understand how you can sustain this long term.

Minister Thibeault: With the sale of Hydro One there's absolutely nothing to do with rates. What we're doing today is looking at making sure that we've balanced our budgets, which we have. So next year we're on track to making sure that we've balanced our budget. With that, we think the beneficiaries, right, the first beneficiaries of this balanced budget should be Ontario families so that's why we're bringing forward this rebate from the tax base. It's not coming from the sale of Hydro One.

Rosemary: Wouldn't it make more sense to regulate how Hydro One actually fixes its electricity rates to make sure that people just pay as little as possible instead of giving people rebates?

Minister Thibeault: So when you're talking about Hydro One, they're more of the customer -- or the provider to our rural areas. With the 8 percent piece, that's coming from many of our local distributors. For example, I'm the MPP for Sudbury so Greater Sudbury Utilities. We're going to be working with Greater Sudbury Utilities to provide the 8 percent rebate to the families and the businesses in Sudbury. When it comes to Hydro One, they're the provider in the rural areas, and we're making sure those families are getting a 20 percent reduction because that 20 percent will be going to what is called the delivery charge, the supply cost to getting that electricity to families, so what we want to do there, Rosie, is make sure we

can lower those rates for them to bring them in line with the provincial average because we recognized that there is a higher cost to making sure that we get the energy to these families, and we want to ensure we find ways to help them. This rebate of 20 percent is a significant way of helping them.

Rosemary: The Progressive Conservative leader Patrick Brown is saying this high cost of electricity didn't seem to be a problem last May when your competitors had said, listen, we just want our rates to be—your predecessor said we want rates to be competitive. Is this really about slumping polls and trying to get re-elected or is this about addressing a problem that you've just woken up to? Why now?

Minister Thibeault: Rosie, you and I have been in this game long enough to know governments aren't that nimble. I wish we were. We had the byelection last week. The reason we are doing this now is because as I said at the beginning, for the last ten years we've been building a system that's safe, reliable and clean, and I think it's important for us to recognize we need to take this to the next level and make this as affordable as we can for as many families and businesses across the province. And you know, making sure we continue to invest in our electricity system is something that we saw as important and we've been doing that, as I said, for the last decade, but we've also been trying to find ways to mitigate our rates, and we've done that with the renegotiation of the Samsung agreement which saved \$3.7 billion, the continued operations of the Pickering plant which saved \$600 million. So all of these savings continue to add up and put downward mitigation on our rates which is something that has been going on for years.

Rosemary: So is the commitment to eliminate the deficit by, I think it's 2017-18 for you guys? Is that still in place? And how do you plan to get there given these new rebates?

Minister Thibeault: I know Minister Sousa will be bringing forward the public accounts documents very shortly that will show how we're going to be meeting our balanced budgets. That's something that I'm very proud to be part of a government that is actually going to meet that commitment. As I said, right now when we're on track to meet our deficit and meet our balanced budgets that we want Ontario families to be the first to benefit from that.

Rosemary: Okay, we'll leave it there, Minister. Thank you for your time today, appreciate it.

Minister Thibeault: Great. Nice talking to you, Rosie.

Rosemary: Ontario Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.

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Power & Politics: Power Panel on Ontario Throne Speech

Source: CBCNN

Sep 12, 2016 6:05 PM

Rosemary Barton, Host: Let's move on to the Ontario throne speech today. They prorogued last week as an attempt to deal with probably some of the fallout from the lost byelection and a slump in the polls. Today they made a couple of announcements, one on hydro rebates that was announced, one, on creating new 100,000 child care spaces over the next five years. They say they can still get back on track, get out of deficit by 2017-18. Brad, what do you make of what is actually going on here in terms of strategy? Did you want to go first?

Josh Wingrove: No, I'm good.

Rosemary: He does want to go first. Josh gets to go first. He physically slumped, so I have to physically let him go.

Josh Wingrove: I'll be very quick.

Rosemary: You don't have to be quick! You go first. You're very eager.

Josh Wingrove: Always, always. It's September. We're all full of energy. This is a move by government that I think is recognizing the state of affairs it's in. I think a lot of people were very surprised to see them win a majority the last time. They'll be hard pressed to win a majority I think again. So they've taken these pocketbook measures, as some journalists would describe them, not insignificant. They sold off a stake of Hydro One, a very large I.P.O. They have raised certain tax rates particularly on high earners. Ontario is

rated very lowly for competitiveness, particularly for small business, because power costs are through the roof, in large part because we phased out coal which was a decision made for many reasons of course. They had a Hydro One plan and now they're offering a rebate. They had balance and now they're spending it in a very visible Harper-esque, you know who gave you your money way. I think it underscores the changing tides in Ontario, that the Liberals are not particularly committed to their -- what had been their vision, that they're willing to make these significant changes and the very fact -- you do a throne speech when you trying to reset the agenda. There's a reason they're trying to reset the agenda.

Rosemary: I'm glad I let you go first. Brad?

Brad Lavigne: Josh took all my stuff! That's why we never let Josh go first!

Josh Wingrove: Sorry. I had three coffees today.

Brad Lavigne: There's something interesting about the tactic. There's no fewer sitting days than what they already had planned. Why reset when you've got pretty much the same -- and you've got the same amount of sitting days and they're bringing back all the legislation that would have been cancelled with the prorogation.

Rosemary: Which is weird, which is unusual.

Brad Lavigne: Trying to read through the leaves here, they're probably, as Josh rightfully points out, they need a reboot because they're suffering from the byelection loss plus Kathleen Wynne's got some pretty bad numbers. There's a sense of malaise. They had an open line on CBC about the throne speech and caller after caller were talking about how they regretted voting for Wynne a couple years ago. You have to bring back some legislation without the embarrassment of amending that legislation in committee regardless of what stage it was at. You can bring back amended legislation and basically from the very beginning hit the reset button. But on the issue -- Josh is absolutely right. The number one issue throughout the entire province whether it's downtown Toronto or throughout the north is electricity. Not many people said I voted for Kathleen Wynne because I wanted hydro privatized. Now they're handing out the big cheques. They're getting more of a bang -- I submit they're getting more of a bang for the announcement because they prorogued, did the throne speech and they get to drag this out for a number of days than had they come out and woke up Monday morning and talked about the rebate. On the policy front, this makes little or no sense because people -- particularly in rural Ontario who are paying really high rates, these rebates will be a drop in the bucket, will be used up prior to them getting the vote, and why are you doing this in the first place? Why don't you lower my electricity costs. They can't because they've sold off, as Josh rightfully points out. This is a big issue and they're trying to stick handle it in the crisis mode.

Rosemary: If you don't have money to pay electricity, I'm not sure a rebate is going to help you.

Brad Lavigne: Even if it's only a portion.

Rosemary: Chad and Amanda and I've got to go.

Chad Rogers: I'd quickly say that Kathleen Wynne has decided she wants to compete in the next election. She realizes right now she looks like she's done for. But she's also today, by announcing the day care spaces announced she'd rather run against Patrick Brown than Andrea Horwath, and she's trying to steal the NDP's issue bucket before they get out of the gate. On the subsidizing of the power bills, hydro and electricity policy in Ontario is so bastardized and gross, most Ontarians regard their power bill as a ransom note. You pay more to get the power to you and bizarre charges than you pay for power you actually use. This is the fourth round to try and stem the bleeding while bills are still going up as much as 40 percent in the next five years. This is a total admission of defeat. This is the beginning of the end for Kathleen Wynne. And now it's really an audition, is it going to be Patrick Brown or is it going to be Andrea Horwath.

Rosemary: I love how Chad wavers so often in his declarations. Amanda?

Amanda Alvaro: Very doomy. I always wish we had some kind of sound for you.

Rosemary: We've got new music! We'll find one for him. Okay, Amanda.

Amanda Alvaro: This doesn't have anything to do with politics. This isn't about policy. Sorry. This isn't about parliament. This is all about politics. This is about a government that's been on their back foot, been backed in to a corner, been on the defence for many months, had a really difficult summer culminating in this byelection. The poll numbers are down. They needed a reset. That's exactly what this is about. A throne speech allows you, like Brad said, to command the agenda for a number of days. You can start

parceling out these little announceables, some really big announceables, and, frankly it's very retail. The kind of things they're talking about are the stuff that families care about, money in your pocket. While it may not matter two years from now, it matters today. Today people wake up, tomorrow people are going to wake up with "The London Free Press" and "The Barrie Examiner" and they're going to read they're going to get a cheque. It's a smart move for the Liberals to reset, change, get off of the fundraising issues, get off of the things that have been dogging them and start owning the narrative. It's about time.

Josh Wingrove: It matters for Canada, very quickly, because Ontario, we are relying on them to carry our economic rebound right now and it ain't happening so far.

Chad Rogers: If her numbers don't turn around, she's out in the new year.

Rosemary: Isn't it funny, how I said last word and then two more people talked? The set has changed, the people have not.

Josh Wingrove: Not as imposing as it was.

Rosemary: Thank you everybody.

Transcript captured directly from source. Some typographical errors or omissions are to be expected.