
PREMIER WYNNE'S REMARKS AT VISION EXTRUSIONS

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Speaker(s): Premier Kathleen Wynne

PREMIER WYNNE: Thank you. Thank you Steven, thank very much and thanks for being here. Steven is as you all know an absolutely passionate advocate for Vaughan and would have us here every week if we could manage it. It's great to be back and it's great to be here with Glenn Thibeault who is our Minister of Energy. And to all of the Visions team – the Vaughan and the Visions team – it's great to be here with all of you. I want to just particularly thank Vic and Sergio and Colby, his son and grandson. I was commenting that it is a real testament to the strength of a family that three generations can work together. As you all know that doesn't always work and so thank you very much for the tour and thank you for what you are doing to build up this community but to build up the province because as Vic told me, 70-per-cent of what you produce here is exported and in your other plant, 90-per-cent. So that's the kind of business that we want to, we want to support and find ways to allow them to expand. And as we can see that's exactly what is happening at Vision Extrusions. So when I was first here in 2013 I learned that one of Vision's principles is, 'if you can envision it, we can build it.' So whatever you can imagine, they can build it. We took a similar message to the people of the province in 2014. We asked them to envision a stronger, fairer Ontario; a place with more opportunity with cleaner air, better access to education and stronger healthcare. That's the vision of this province that we took to people in 2014 and we said, and we're going to build that. We're going to build that. We're also going to build a place where businesses can thrive in a competitive global economy. And that's to the point of what Vic has done here. That created a business that is part of the global economy; that's serving the global economy. When we received a mandate to deliver on that vision we began that work of building Ontario up. And that included the final phase of phasing out heavily polluting coal-fired electricity. We did that. We got rid of coal-fired plants. Ending coal saves about \$4-billion a year in health and other pollution related costs and today more than 90-per-cent of Ontario's electricity is emissions free. That's a remarkable achievement in the North American context but also in the global context. When I travelled to Paris and met with leaders from other provinces, states and countries last year it was clear to me that many, many jurisdictions are still struggling with how to get to a clean grid. And so we are ahead of that curve.

[Speaking In French] Today, more than 90 per cent of Ontario's electricity is emissions free.

And that is something that we can all take pride in. We're leading in the fight against climate change and we're well positioned for that low carbon economy of tomorrow. That is what companies and jurisdictions are going to need to do in order to be competitive in the global economy; is to be low carbon. At the same time, the cost of building a clean and reliable electricity grid after the decades of neglect that had taken place have pushed hydro rates up. We recognize that. Knowing how this was squeezing households and businesses, we've already taken a number of steps to push those rates back down. We've been on this for some time. For example, we removed the debt retirement charge from residential electricity bills; we made electricity more affordable for low and middle income families through the Ontario Electricity Support Plan and we renegotiated the Green Energy Investment Agreement with Samsung. But even with those costs that we've managed to take out of the system and off people's bills, the price of power has continued to rise here just as it has across Canada and around

the world. And I've heard from people around the province, in every region, that it was becoming too much. We've listened to that, we've taken those concerns to heart because it's not just an electricity issue – that's the presenting issue – but people need more help with the cost of living. That's what that discussion is about. And it's my job to figure out how we can give people the break that they need wherever we can. So our plan has helped Ontario's economy emerge as one of Canada's fastest growing. But I know that for a family going from 1 to 2 or 3-per-cent growth doesn't necessarily help with next month's bills. So the fact that we are one of the leading jurisdictions in North America in terms of economic growth doesn't necessarily help an individual family. For the province though the growth means that we're able further to support people. So what that economic growth means and the job creation means is that we actually are in a position to help those individual families. A stronger economy means we can help make everyday living more affordable and that's exactly why jobs and growth are my top priority. And it's why on Monday we announced that we would lower electricity bills for people and businesses across Ontario.

[Speaking In French] We announced our intention to reduce electricity bills for people and businesses across Ontario.

So later today, Glenn Thibeault our Minister of Energy who when he came into this portfolio knew that this was a top priority for us to find ways to deal with this challenge; he will introduce the Ontario Rebate for Electricity Consumers Act. And he will do that this afternoon. This legislation, if passed, will rebate an amount equal to the provincial portion of the HST directly on the electricity bill for millions of families, for farms and small businesses. That's an 8-per-cent savings every month. The opposition want to call this anything but a tax break. But the fact is the math is pretty simple. The province will keep less tax from electricity bills so that people can pay less and keep more of their hard earned money. That's what a balanced plan to build Ontario up does for everyone. We are also making sure that businesses are benefiting. That's why it is great to be here at Vision this morning. The price of power is an important consideration for businesses that are looking to expand or invest, so we are massively expanding the industrial conservation initiative.

[Speaking In French] We are greatly expanding the energy savings initiative in the industrial sector

So the ICI program can help businesses manage their electricity costs by rewarding conservation efforts with lower rates. It can reduce their electricity costs by up to a third. As we walked through the plant today, Vic kept pointing out to me the ways that they implemented changes to conserve. Here at Visions Extrusions, ICI has meant significant saving, saving that have been reinvested to grow the business. Vision is one of 300 businesses benefiting from the program. With the changes that we are announcing, the ICI program could be available to 1,000 more businesses across the province. All of that is part of our commitment to build a competitive, low carbon economy for tomorrow. Because good jobs in a growing economy mean that we can continue to help people in their everyday lives today. So, helping businesses today, helping them to plan and build for tomorrow means that we can create wealth that allows us to support people every day in their lives in Ontario.

I'm thrilled about being able to hear to see a living, breathing example of how the ICI program has worked and to thank Vic and his team for the work they have done to capitalize on that advantage. It's just terrific – you are leading the way.