

QP Update

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The Minister took Brown's lead off question about electricity and reiterated our commitment to lowering energy costs and also stressed that we remain committed to balancing.

INSTANT HANSARD

>> **Patrick Brown:** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of finance. Again as the Liberals always do they play a shell game. The latest shell game is shifting hydro bills around. We saw with the clean energy rebate interlace with the H.S.T. Rebate while people's bills still go up. **The latest leaked plan suggests the costs from your hydro bill will shift to your tax bill. Mr. Speaker, H.S.T., income tax, the fees, the money needs to come from somewhere. Will this government come clean and acknowledge that in their leaked plans, taxes are going to go up. Simply –**

>> Minister Sousa: Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to say that we're balancing the books. I'm proud to say we've reduced our deficit of \$1.9 billion --, Mr. Speaker. We're taking every step necessary to protect the interests of all Ontarians and taxpayers to ensure that we invest in the things that matter for the long term to make it competitive.

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the Minister of finance. Rather than answer a question on hydro, the government chooses to cheer their government talking points. So I will once again try to ask a question about hydro. Ontarians are struggling with their hydro bills and I would appreciate an answer to a question on hydro. This is a government, for those 30 bad contracts they're now saying they might look at, they receive \$1.3 million in donations. So my question is will the Minister of finance come clean and acknowledge this latest leaked plan is simply a shell game of shifting funds from the hydro bills to the tax base?

>> **Minister Sousa:** The member opposite hasn't produced any plan whatsoever. But what we have done is invested over 50 to \$60 billion in new hydro construction, more transmission facilities, more clean power plants, enabling us to get off dirty coal and ensure we protect our environment. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we have greater integrity in the system which we didn't have when the Conservatives were in power. We had blackouts and lots of Brownouts, Mr. Speaker. We are ensuring that does not happen. We are investing and we're investing to protect the interests of all Ontarians and ensuring our electricity rates go down to protect and mitigate –

>> **Patrick Brown:** Mr. Speaker, again to the Minister of finance. The Minister of finance braes there is less Brownouts, but the reality is there's more. Since 2012, there's been 275% more power outages. So the system is not more reliable. You signed bad contracts. This government signed bad contracts. They brought in the global adjustment. They have created a mess. And rather than simply give the government talking points, what I'd like is the Minister of finance to apologize to people of Ontario and -- Amazing, the Liberal party got for these bad contracts. **Will the Minister of finance at least encourage the Premier to return those donations for those bad contracts?**

>> Minister Thibeault: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to stand and speak to this of course, Mr. Speaker, because Ontarians do remember those rolling Brownouts, Mr. Speaker, and the blackouts on the -- and the smog days, Mr. Speaker. Those are a thing of the past, Mr. Speaker, thanks to this government. \$50 billion, Mr. Speaker, we invested in generation and transmission. P.C.S forget what it was like when they were in government, Mr. Speaker. They're desperate to create a problem when there is none, Mr. Speaker ... Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pointing to power outages of falling trees and dump trucks hitting lines, Mr. Speaker, we've actually made sure we've built a system that is reliable. And that's what we see right across the province with the \$50 billion of --

N.B.: Transcripts are captured by a closed captioning system and may contain errors.