

# Hansard: Bisson to Thibeault -- Northern Hydro Costs

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## INSTANT HANSARD

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>> MPP Bisson: Thank you, Speaker. My question is to the **Premier. Premier**, hydro prices is a real issue for real people. It is not an abstract thing. There are citizens across this province and businesses across this province who are being hurt. And I want to give you but one story. In kapuskasing lives monsieur and Madame Sylvain. They have to heat with wood because there's no natural gas where they live. They're off the grid. They use electricity only as a backup to wood if the wood fire was to go out but they're there all the time. They used to pay about \$275 a month for their electricity bill. But it started to go up so years ago so they decide today take your advice and that of your Minister's and to do everything they could to reduce their electricity bill by reducing consumption. They have taken stuff off-line. They have bought all of the L.E.D. Lights they can get. They've done everything they're able to reduce their hydro bills but yet it went up. This month they get their hydro bill. It's \$375 bucks. How can anybody have confidence in your government when they do what you say they're going to do, and yet their bill still goes up?

>> **Premier Wynne:** Minister of energy.

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the member for the question and for explaining the situation that many families in northern Ontario are facing, and you know, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to recognize that those in the north and in rural areas are seeing their bills go up and that's why we're going to take more action. We did come forward with a rrrp, reduction of \$60, Mr. Speaker, that they're seeing on their bills. And one thing important to recognize when it comes to conservation programs, Mr. Speaker, is they do work. They do work in the sense that, when we conserve energy, if every House hold continues to save energy, to conserve energy, Mr. Speaker, we don't need to build more generation. And if we don't need to build more generation, Mr. Speaker, we can keep our costs on a downward rate. And that's what we're going to continue to do. But in this instance -- and I don't know the full story about the couple from kapuskasing but I do recognize,

Mr. Speaker, that in the north and in rural parts of Ontario. We can do more and we will do more, Mr. Speaker.

>> MPP Bisson: Minister tdoesn't work for -- he's done everything along with his wife they can do to reduce consumption. They're doing what you ask them but their bill still goes up. And this is why people are so frustrated. It's not just the fact that they pay more. It's a question they do everything the same and yet it still goes up. So why don't you admit that your entire hydro policy is a failure, and what we really need to do is to find a solution to reduce their hydro bills and stop talking about it and do something to help monsieur and Madame Sylvain.

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I wonder when they were in power and they cancelled the conservation program, did that actually help the families that we had to reinstitute, Mr. Speaker ? We would -- we had to rebuild the entire system. And that comes with a cost, Mr. Speaker. For all families in Ontario, the one thing that we've done, Mr. Speaker, is we phased out coal. That's actually, Mr. Speaker, helped every family in this province. By phasing out coal we've saved \$4.3 billion in our health care system. We're seeing 23% reduction in air pollution deaths and 41% reduction, Mr. Speaker, in air pollution hospitalizations. We've built a system, Mr. Speaker, that people can rely on. We no longer see rolling Brownouts or blackouts but we know, Mr. Speaker, that we can do more. We want to see more conservation. We want to see a stronger grid and we'll make sure, Mr. Speaker, we find ways to helping that family in kapuskasing and all families around the province.

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