

Hansard: Brown (Smith) to Thibeault -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Since I can't get an answer on the government's cuts to autism services, let's try something different, Mr. Speaker. We just received copies of the long-term energy plan. And, Mr. Speaker, I can't find on what page includes the section on giving mega contracts to Liberal donors. We know that the auditor general said we overpaid by \$9.2 billion our renewable energy. Of these mega contracts the companies got, they donated \$1.3 million to the Ontario Liberal party. So was the section on giving mega contracts to Liberal friends and insiders, was that section -- could the Premier please enlighten us?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very pleased to talk about the long-term energy plan that's talking about a plan that we've brought forward that's reducing rates for the people in this province by 25%, Mr. Speaker. This is the second plan that we have launched in like the last six months, Mr. Speaker, and I know we're still waiting for one from the opposition. But you know when we're talking about the benefits of this plan, it's actually bringing fairness and choice and innovation, Mr. Speaker. Innovation that's going to actually see ratepayers, both large and small, see their bills reduced, Mr. Speaker. See more jobs created in an innovative sector that's already created over 40,000 jobs. This plan, Mr. Speaker, is bringing forward prosperity for our province, making sure that we can continue to keep our G.H.G.S low, working with the ministry of environment and climate change to meet our climate change action plan goal. This plan, Mr. Speaker, is something that Ontarians should be proud of.

>> MPP Smith: Thank you, Speaker. This long-term energy plan confirms that what we've said all along. After the next election, the Liberal electricity borrowing scheme gets wiped out. But there's \$40 billion borrowing scheme is going to cost ratepayers an extra \$4 billion long term because it was never, ever intended to be an electricity plan, Mr. Speaker. This is a reelection plan for Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals in Ontario. Speaker, the unfair hydro plan is yet another -- Speaker, the unfair hydro plan is another bad deal for Ontario that's going to drive up electricity costs even further. How much more does this Minister think Ontario ratepayers can afford on their electricity bills?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So when we look at the electricity price outlook, Mr. Speaker, we've brought down rates by 25%. That is actually clear, rates are down 25%. Then they come down a little bit more in 2018 and they're held to the cost of inflation for the three years after that, Mr. Speaker. Then as we said, just moments ago, Mr. Speaker, when we were talking about the long-term energy plan and talking about it through the media and to the people of Ontario, we're going to continue to take costs out of the system. We have examples of doing that, Mr. Speaker. Besides the 25% from the fair hydro plan, we actually did build new nuclear cutting out billions of costs. We didn't actually bring forward the plan reducing billions of costs, Mr. Speaker. We renegotiated the Samsung agreement. That's what you do, Mr. Speaker, is you find out ways to reduce costs when you have plans. On that side of the House, they don't have a plan and they don't have a clue either.

>> MPP Smith: Speaker, it took this government, it took this government almost a year to come up with this long-term energy plan. It was supposed to come out in December. Here we are, in late October, and we get a plan that really doesn't remove any costs from the system. This is a \$40 billion borrowing scheme. And the Liberals even managed to break a basic law of economics today. Demand is going to stay the same. Supply is going to stay the same. Prices, however, will shoot to new record highs after the next election. And that's even after they've cooked the books to make House holds smaller. Thank you, Speaker. Only in Liberal Ontario is this even possible. Mr. Speaker -- Speaker, everybody can see through the \$40 billion borrowing scam. They have to stop fudging the numbers. When are they going to get serious about --

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very clearly, Mr. Speaker, the opposition has no idea on what to do with this file. All they can do, Mr. Speaker, is stand up and complain. This is a plan that is bringing fairness and choice. It is bringing -- This is a plan that is bringing forward choice, Mr. Speaker. It's bringing forward fairness, and it's a real plan, a realistic plan that the people of Ontario can actually look at and help them understand where the electricity system, where the energy system is going, Mr. Speaker. On the other side, they haven't brought a thing forward, Mr. Speaker, not one thing that would actually do anything to lower rates, but only increase rates. We've brought forward the 25% reduction through the fair hydro plan. We've taken costs out of the system. We'll continue to roll up our sleeves and do more for the people of Ontario through this plan.

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