

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

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the **Premier**. Last week we revealed a leaked Cabinet document showing that skyrocketing hydro prices were going to be back to Normal in Ontario. Hydro bills will hit a record high in 2024, and then in 2028, the average bill will hit well over \$200. Those families already faced with a ridiculously high hydro bill will see it jump another 6.5%. And 10.5% in 2028. Hydro rates will be higher than they've ever been before. Mr. Speaker, why does this government refuse to actually fix the structural problems in hydro? It's about time they - Hydro.

>> **Premier** Wynne: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I know that the member opposite knows that he's referring to a document that is out of date, Mr. Speaker. A document that was part of -- that was part of the deliberation as we developed our fair hydro plan, Mr. Speaker, and, you know, the reality is, as a plan -- as a plan is developed, and it may be -- Mr. Speaker, as a plan is developed, there is much input and there are many -- Mr. Speaker, the many iterations of options and information that come forward in the development of a plan. We want an Ontario with an even playing field, Mr. Speaker. Our fair hydro plan is about moving in that direction, creating a fairer Ontario where people have the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, all Ontarians, to achieve equally, and so taking 25% off all the electricity bills of residents in this province, Mr. Speaker, from the residential bill, that is the fair thing to do and that's what our plan will do.

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the **Premier**. So the **Premier's** defence is the document was out of date. We're talking about just a few months ago. 2017 is out of date. The only thing out of date is this government. Population of Ontario. Mr. Speaker, the Liberal press secretary called these leaked Cabinet documents on energy false and inaccurate. Now the new speaking point is out of date. The Minister of energy said he's seen thousands of graphs but he couldn't comment on the leaked Cabinet document. Well, if he can't comment on that leaked document, will the **Premier** pledge here today to show us the graph, recent graph that will actually show hydro rates going down? That would be one -- Mr. Speaker --

>> **Premier Wynne:** Speaker, a document can be false and out of date at the same time because it is not a document on which our plan is built. It was part of the process of developing our plan. But, Mr. Speaker, you know, when I talk about a fairer Ontario, I talk about an Ontario where people have the opportunity to live out their dreams. And, Mr. Speaker, we recognize, we recognize that we have wonderful institutions in this province. We have a wonderful health care system. We have a wonderful publicly funded education system, Mr. Speaker. They are strong. They have been built up over the last number of years, Mr. Speaker, and we intend to keep them that way. But, Mr. Speaker, there are people in this province, even though our economy is doing very well, there are people who are not sharing in that. So our budget, Mr. Speaker, is about addressing those concerns, Mr. Speaker. We recognize that it is the first balanced budget in a decade. In nearly a decade in Ontario. We have the opportunity now to invest in people and make sure that that playing field is more level.

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the **Premier**. And my question was, given the recent Cabinet document that hydro rates are going to go out of control again -- and that's their graph -- my question was will the **Premier** commit to showing a new document that shows hydro rates actually going down? This fair hydro plan is a boring plan. It kicks the can down the road. It does nothing on reining in executive salaries. Does nothing on these bad contracts. It does nothing on the water power every day. It does nothing on the hydro we're giving for free to Michigan, Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York. It's not a plan. It's a reelection gimmick. So when will the **Premier** actually show us the hydro plan with hydro rates going down?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very pleased to rise to show the official opposition leader a plan on how to reduce rates. If passed, Mr. Speaker, by 25%. And I know he doesn't have a plan, Mr. Speaker. So what they want to do is stand up and complain. But you know what, Mr. Speaker? We made sure that we looked after families, farms. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We looked after families, farms, 500,000 small businesses right across the province, Mr. Speaker. And again it just shows that the party opposite has no idea what to do on the energy file, has no plan, because all they have to do, Mr. Speaker, to look at the 2010 long-term energy plan, the 2013 long-term energy plan, Mr. Speaker. You know what? We have a plan coming forward in 2017 that will continue to show. That prices will continue to be lower, unlike that party. No idea. No idea on how to work for electricity for the people of Ontario.

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