

Hansard: Coe to Premier (Thibeault) -- Electricity Management

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Date: Tue, 21 Nov 2017 10:51:47 -0500

INSTANT HANSARD

>>MPP Smith: Thank you very much, Speaker. My question this morning is for the **Premier**. Research completed by the Ontario society of professional engineers really shines a light on the mismanagement of Ontario's electricity system. They poured over data issued by the independent electricity system operator and the Ontario energy board, and what was revealed was wildly disappointing, Speaker. It showed the province exported electricity at a net financial loss of up to 1.25 billion with a B dollars, billion, \$1.25 billion. Will the **Premier** confirm that to the Liberal government –

>>**Premier** Wynne: Mr. Speaker, the I.S.O. Estimates that electricity exports reduce costs for Ontarians by hundreds of millions of dollars every year, so those are cost savings, Mr. Speaker, and this net benefit to Ontario was \$236 million last year, Mr. Speaker. That's a net benefit to the people of Ontario because of taking part in importing and exporting electricity to the benefit of their ratepayers, Mr. Speaker. On top of regular trade, we also pursued firm agreements wherever it makes sense in the province, Mr. Speaker, and I know that the the Minister of energy will want to speak more to this in the supplementary.

>>MPP Coe: So Speaker, the government is saying that the experts, the engineers are wrong and they know better. This Liberal spin is ridiculous. It's like costing \$20 to make a pizza, selling eight slices at \$11 a piece and saying you're making money. It's ridiculous. It's absurd. Europe not makingh money. We just wanted the government to come clean here this morning and start to tell the truth on this.

Okay, so sure the government found an export partner, but these numbers here are staggering. The numbers from the engineers are staggering. We're subsidizing power for Michigan and New York and other neighbouring jurisdictions and they're poaching our jobs to make matters worse, because they're taking our electricity at a low cost. Mr. Speaker, will the **Premier** admit this government lost over \$1 billion exporting power?

>>Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So it is important to note that today Ontario is a net exporter of power, and in 2016 the net benefit, Mr. Speaker, of those exports to ratepayers was \$236 million as estimated by the independent system operator. These benefits translate into reduced costs --Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And so since 2013, the net benefit of our exports has been over \$1 billion, Mr. Speaker, in savings to Ontario ratepayers. Before, Mr. Speaker, back in the early 2000s, Ontario used to be an importer of electricity and what was the result? That was when our system was dependent on unreliable and expensive electricity from neighbouring jurisdictions, often forcing us to overpay for electricity. Now, Mr. Speaker, we're making money, we're making sure we put that back into the system to keep costs --

>>MPP Coe: Mr. Speaker, this political spin is absurd. These numbers don't lie. They come from the engineers here in Ontario. In 2016, the province exported a total of 21.9 terrawatt hours of electricity at a net financial loss of more than \$500 million, and most of this was clean, green energy, spilled over the dams at Niagara Falls and other hydroelectric facilities across the province. The engineers know that over the last few years, the total exports represent nearly enough electricity to power every home in Ontario for the entire year. That's the legacy of the mismanagement on the electricity file from the Liberal government. Mr. Speaker, how can this government continue to gouge electricity customers, at the same time exporting enough electricity at a loss to power every home in the province?

>> So Mr. Speaker, I know the member opposite used the word legacy. So let's talk about their legacy when it comes to electricity. In 2002 and 2003, Ontario paid \$900 million to import electricity. From 1996 to 2003 -- From '96-2003 overall installed generation capacity fell 96%, that's like running Niagara Falls dry, at the same time demand grew by 8%, Mr. Speaker. That's their legacy. Our legacy? Rebuilding a system, making it clean, making it reliable, and bringing forward the fair hydro plan that makes it affordable, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to make sure that we serve the best interests of Ontario ratepayers in hand and they'll continue to misinform those ratepayers, Mr. Speaker. - I'll withdraw. I'll withdraw.

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