

Hansard: Hardeman to Thibeault (Duguid) -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> MPP Hardeman: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the **Premier**. One of the largest employers in my riding said I'm a single hydro bill charged for electricity used was \$38,000. But when they add on the government global adjustment and other charges, the final monthly bill was -- listen to this, **Premier** -- \$385,000. They run 24 hours a day to deliver just in time to car plants. So they can't shift production to use the I.C.I. Program. Can the **Premier** explain why this major employer is paying more than \$350,000, or 90% of their hydro bill for government's extra billing charges?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very please today rise and talk about the programs that are out there that actually are helping businesses, Mr. Speaker. I do hope that this one business will actually utilize many of the programs that are out there, Mr. Speaker, to actually help them save dollars. Mr. Speaker, there's the I.E.P. Program, Mr. Speaker. There's the industrial accelerator program. There are many other programs that are out there that actually help small businesses and help our medium size manufacturing businesses, Mr. Speaker, ensure that they can -- We recognize, Mr. Speaker, the importance of actually helping our businesses reduce those rates. We've seen many of those businesses right across the province use many of these programs, Mr. Speaker, and it will actually help them reduce their buys. But when it comes to Ontario's fair hydro plan, Mr. Speaker, we're going to see all of our small businesses. They're going to see that 25% reduction, Mr. Speaker, coming right off and that's something that will help them.

>> MPP Hardeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The Minister obviously missed a comment that I said these programs do not work back in woodstock. The past few months it's been announced -- back to the **Premier**, Mr. Speaker. The past few months it's been announced Oxford is losing 1,000 new jobs. This is the government's hydro rate for businesses are putting more of these jobs at risk. And yet the government's hydro announcement does nothing to help the major businesses we have left, which of course would be few tech. **Premier**, people can't pay their hydro bills if they lose their jobs. What does the **Premier** have to say to all the people of Oxford who are worried their job will be the next to disappear because of her government's policies?

>> Minister Duguid: Mr. Speaker, here's what I say to the folks in Oxford and what I say to folks right across this province. We have taken a number of measures to make this province more

competitive. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we have the lowest effective corporate tax rate, very generous R&D tax credit. We've invested to the tune of \$3.1 billion -- Our investments, Mr. Speaker, with businesses right across this province 3.1 billion since 2004 have accrued to over \$31 billion in private sector investment, 175,000 jobs created and retained. So where are we, Mr. Speaker? We have not had a lowered unemployment rate in a decade. Mr. Speaker, not in a decade. Leading the G-7 in growth. We've created 700,000 jobs, and for the first time in 13 years, Mr. Speaker. We've seen seven consecutive --

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