

Hansard: Hatfield to Matthews -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> MPP Hatfield: Thank you, Speaker. I have a question for the Deputy **Premier**. Good morning. I have a constituent. She's 67. Her husband is a stroke victim. She's trying to save money, Speaker. She got rid of her electric clothes dryer, switched to natural gas and it only saved her 10 bucks a month. Her most recent hydro bill was for \$130 of usage, but more than \$100 in delivery charges. Speaker, what does the Deputy **Premier** say to folks struggling to keep up with her government's failed energy policy?

>> Minister Matthews: Well, thank you, Speaker, and good morning to you too, sir. This example and many others that we have heard in this House for weeks now illustrate exactly why we are making the changes we are making, Speaker. Our value ses. People should not be struggling to pay their electricity bills when they have so many other demands, Speaker. So that is why we are bringing prices down by 25% on average, Speaker. There is additional supports for people who live in rural Ontario in remote communities. There is additional support available for people who are in low-income House holds, Speaker. We've got additional supports available for people with medical needs that require additional electricity usage, Speaker. So it is exactly that kind of story that has compelled us to make this significant reduction in electricity.

>> MPP Hatfield: Speaker, my constituent takes a monthly prescription pill. It costs her more than \$100. It's not covered by ohip. There are times, she tells me, when she has to make a decision, do I buy more medication or do I pay my hydro bill? She also tells me a lot of people, a lot of seniors in her neighbourhood. When she goes out in the evening and at night, those homes are darker these days, these nights, these evenings because people can't afford to turn on their lights. She's not the only one struggling these days, Speaker. When can seniors in Ontario finally get a break from the failed policies of this Liberal government?

>> Minister Matthews: The answer is they've already seen a reduction, Speaker, that came in in a January bill. There will be additional savings if and when this legislation gets passed, Speaker. What I would say to the member opposite who I know actually cares about this issue and the people in this community to support this bill. Their plan, Speaker, is a plan that would take \$4 billion out of the services people in this province rely on like health care, Speaker. So the plan to spend \$4 billion would not take one penny off one bill, Speaker. Our plan would do that, 25% on average and more for people facing particularly high electricity bills.

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