

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

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> Andrea Horwath: Speaker, my question's for the **Premier**. Thanks to documents leaked by a whistle-blower last week, we now know for sure that hydro rates will soar as a result of the Liberal government's hydro scheme. And what's worse is that these documents prove that the **Premier** knows it too. So can the **Premier** explain, Speaker, why she is so clearly putting her desire to get reelected ahead of the well-being of Ontarians?

>> **Premier Wynne**: Well again, Mr. Speaker, the document to which the leader of the third party refers is a document that -- The document that was not used to establish our plan, Mr. Speaker, and in the development of a plan, there are many options that are put forward, Mr. Speaker. There's modelling that is done. Our plan was built to reduce people's bills by 25% across the province, Mr. Speaker, and keep those bills down in the immediate term and in the midterm and the long term, Mr. Speaker, we will develop a long-term energy plan that will continue to take costs out of the system. Mr. Speaker, our fair hydro plan was designed to meet the needs of residents across this province. Already seeing those initial reductions, and by summer they will see a 25% reduction, Mr. Speaker.

>> Andrea Horwath: Speaker, this is a height of arrogance. Ontario families who are struggling under the crushing weight, the crushing weight of the damage that this **Premier** has done to our hydro system are frustrated. And rightfully so. The **Premier** bragged, Speaker, for two months the **Premier** bragged about her hydro plan, not once telling Ontarians that it will actually make their bills go up. How can this **Premier**, how can this **Premier** justify this disgusting betrayal of Ontarians?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've been saying all along that you know, Mr. Speaker, we had to clean up our electricity system. You know one of the things that we did, Mr. Speaker, was we removed coal and we talked to many families, and one family in particular, T Y young man was named vernment made by eliminating coal, he hasn't had to visit the hospital in one year, Mr. Speaker. That is a very positive thing. When you think about the investments that we've

made. We know, Mr. Speaker, that that came with a cost. So what we've done is we've brought forward a plan. We worked with stakeholders. We worked with the community. We worked with everyone involved in this sector, Mr. Speaker, to come up with plan to reduce bills on average by 25%. If we can get this legislation passed, Mr. Speaker. We want to see this relief for families as soon as possible. We want to ensure that we help families –

>> Andrea Horwath: The **Premier** has prioritized her party and her high-powered friend at every opportunity, Speaker. At every opportunity. She has sold the majority stake in Hydro One, against the wishes of 80% of Ontario families, and her borrowing scheme will end up costing these same families more on their already skyrocketing hydro bills. But you know who benefits, Speaker ? Bay street bankers and Liberal insiders. That's who benefits from 14 years of Liberal government in the province of Ontario. When will this **Premier** do her job and look out for regular Ontario families instead of those who are already at the top?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Because of the Ontario fair hydro plan, Mr. Speaker, if it passes, 25% on average will be the reduction for every family in this province, Mr. Speaker. 800,000 families in rural Ontario and in northern Ontario. They will see a 40 to 50% reduction, Mr. Speaker. Low-income individuals. First nations individuals will see significant relief if this legislation passes, Mr. Speaker. And I know they can only add a very small line on the last page of their 13-page document, Mr. Speaker, but we're making sure that we're bringing an additional 50% on the Ontario electricity support program for the most vulnerable, Mr. Speaker. And I know, Mr. Speaker, that they don't like seeing infrastructure and jobs being created in this province but that's what we're doing. When we make \$2.8 billion, Mr. Speaker, on the sale of Hydro One, surpassing the goal of \$9 million, we're creating jobs. We're making sure that we're building our province up and at the same time reducing electricity rates.

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