

Hansard: Horwath to Premier -- Energy Investments - Hydro One

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> Andrea Horwath: Speaker, I can say that it really doesn't show if that's the **Premier's** goal. But this question is actually to the **Premier** as well. People see that the **Premier** is making decisions that are about privatization, and those decisions are more based on the political interest of her party than what's best for people. That is totally obvious. They're based on and I quote deflecting anger. They're based on political cover. That's not what the people voted for, Speaker. That's not what the people asked for when they voted in the last election. People had hoped for so much better, and they are so disappointed in what they're getting from this government. So my question is one that's pretty straight up. Will this **Premier** come clean and let us know whether or not she's going to continue to facilitate the privatization Of more of Ontario's hydro system?

>> **Premier Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The decisions that we make as government are often very challenging, very complex, Mr. Speaker. And I said, as a pillar of our plan, that we would invest in infrastructure in this province, Mr. Speaker. So we made a difficult decision. It actually is kind of laughable that the leader of the third party suggested somehow the decision around Hydro One was in our political interests, Mr. Speaker. It was a challenging decision. It was a practical decision. It was not an ideological decision but it was a decision that will lead to and is already meaning that we can invest in people's lives by providing them with the transit and the transportation options that they need so they can get home to their kids, so that they can pick up their kids from child care, so that they can have time with their families, Mr. Speaker, that otherwise they would not be able to have.

>> Andrea Horwath: Speaker, what it was the wrong decision. That's what the decision was. It was the wrong decision. People are worried about their future, Speaker, and they're worried about whether their kids are going to be able to build a good life here in this province. But instead of making decisions that make life easier for people, the government is making it harder for people. Especially low income people who feel the burden the hardest when it comes to their increasing hydro rates. And for rural and northern Ontario families, who are paying the very highest bills, Speaker. And the **Premier's** only concern is to, quote, deflect some public anger away from Liberals, end quote. Now people expected and I have to say, Speaker, people deserve so much better than this. Will this **Premier** commit to stopping any further privatization. Whether it's local utility corporations or whether it's Hydro One?

>> **Premier Wynne:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. The leader of the third party knows full well that the decisions that are made at the local level around utilities. Those are their decisions, Mr. Speaker. The decision that is on the table in the city of Toronto, the leader of the third party will have to speak with the people at council and the mayor at the city of Toronto, Mr. Speaker. If the

leader of the third party is asking whether we will stop investing in transit, Mr. Speaker, whether we will stop investing in transportation infrastructure across the province, Mr. Speaker, no. We will not. Those investments are needed. They're needed in order to create jobs right now and that's what's happening. There are thousands of people working across the province, Mr. Speaker, because of those investments, and those investments are necessary into the future, because if we are going to compete globally, Mr. Speaker, we must have that modernized infrastructure in place. We'll draw business and allow businesses here to expand, Mr. Speaker.

>> Andrea Horwath: Speaker, the **Premier** is not being clear. She knows very well that she has a role to play in facilitating the sell-off of local distribution companies. She knows that she has a role there and for her to suggest she does not is not being up front with the people of this province. People, Speaker, were surprised when the **Premier** announced that she was selling off Hydro One because it's not what they voted for. They didn't vote to sell off local distribution companies either, Speaker. So whether it's Toronto hydro or whether it's any other local distribution company, people did not vote for privatization. They can't afford to pay more just to give the **Premier** political cover and deflect anger away from her Liberal government. So will the **Premier** stop all of the hydro sell-off in the province of Ontario?

>> Premier Wynne: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The leader of the third party was asking whether I would intervene in decision-making at a local level in a unilateral way, Mr. Speaker. I just want to comment that one of the reasons that I got involved in politics, and I know actually there are a number of members who were municipal elected officials, Mr. Speaker, mayors who had lived through the experience of having a provincial government that imposed decision making on local governments, Mr. Speaker, that amalgamate, Mr. Speaker, that didn't consult, didn't work with the municipalities. And, Mr. Speaker, I have a very different modus operandi. The member talked about green energy. Mr. Speaker, when I became the premier one of the first things I did was work with our minister of energy to make sure that we changed the process. Around the siting of wind turbines. I've been working with local governments, Mr. Speaker, rather than acting unilaterally.