

Hansard: Horwath to Premier--Hydro One Sale

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My next question is for the Premier. The privatization of our hydro system began under the Progressive Conservatives and clearly the torch has been successfully passed to this Liberal government. But overwhelmingly, the people of this province, an overwhelming majority of Ontarians have made it clear that they want a public hydro system. When will the Premier finally listen and stop the selloff of Hydro One?

>> Premier Wynne: Mr. Speaker, again, I completely understand why the leader of the third party would want to talk about this because she actually has a plan that would increase or do nothing to reduce people's electricity bills. Her proposal would either keep electricity bills at the same cost or increase them, Mr. Speaker. And the issue that she raises today, the broadening of the ownership of Hydro One would not take one cent of one person's electricity bill. In every corner of the province, infrastructure that will allow people to move themselves, their families, their goods more quickly, Mr. Speaker, and will allow this economy to thrive. That's the decision that we made. We're seeing the fruits of that, Mr. Speaker. Having said that, we know electricity bills have to come down. We have the plan that's going to do that, Mr. Speaker.

>> Andrea Horwath: Mr. Speaker for such a studious Premier, it's shocking and surprising she has not obviously read the NDP Plan apparent through her response. I can tell you this, a quick shot in the arm for a political -- But I can tell you this, a quick shot in the arm for a political party and a leader that's struggling with low popularity should not be the driving force behind the creation of public policy in the province of Ontario. The Premier and her party congratulate themselves regularly on their evidence-based approach to policy making. Can the Premier tell us where is the evidence that continuing the selloff of Hydro One will be good for families or businesses.

>> Premier Wynne: Mr. Speaker, our -- our fair hydro plan is based on reducing people's electricity costs, Mr. Speaker. That's what it's about. And as I said earlier, we began in 2013 to take costs out of the system, Mr. Speaker, to renegotiate contracts, because we knew that there was a need to reduce those costs so that electricity bills would not go up as quickly and as high. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, we recognize that there needed to be more done and that's why we made the decisions that we have made. In fact, I have read the NDP Proposal, Mr. Speaker. And I know that what the NDP Proposal will do is make people wait for any change, will not reduce people's electricity bills, and in some cases, Mr. Speaker, will actually increase their bills. That's not a proposal that we would adopt, Mr. Speaker. We're going to see electricity

prices come down in this province come the summer all across the province.

>> Andrea Horwath: Well, Speaker, the reality is nobody trusts this Liberal government, and you can see why. You just have to go to the internet, read, and know you can't trust what comes out of this Premier's mouth. The plan is being debated in this House this afternoon unlike the Premier and her party. We're not afraid to give Ontarians a detailed plan or take bold action by doing what people want and bringing Hydro One back into full public ownership. Will the Premier stop her wrong headed selloff of Hydro One, agree to start fixing the systemic problems in the system that started with them -- continuing with them and actually support our plan, which is the only plan that addresses the systemic problems, gives people relief on their bills and is, in fact, the only plan on the table.

>> Premier Wynne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So let me just say back to the leader of the third party, I think it would be very helpful if she would explain to the people of Ontario how one cent would come off one electricity bill if we made the changes she's suggesting by Hydro One. I would like the leader of the third party -- Let me ask the leader of the third party why in her proposal there is no mention of first nations, Mr. Speaker, we're actually removing distribution costs, delivery charges from first nations communities, Mr. Speaker. And I would like furthermore like to ask the leader of the third party why she would make low income users of electricity in the province wait, Mr. Speaker, why she doesn't have a plan that would be immediate for low income users, Mr. Speaker ? The reality is that we did a lot of work to come up with proposals that actually would lower people's electricity prices, Mr. Speaker. That is not what the NDP Has done. I understand why. They want to talk about Hydro One and why they want to talk about their proposal, Mr. Speaker. But the fact is what they're proposing will not reduce people's electricity bills. Ours will, Mr. Speaker. We're going to go with our plan.

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