

Hansard: Martins to Thibeault -- Hydro Rebate

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> MPP Martins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of energy. ... over the past few months I've heard concerns from my constituents in Davenport about their electricity bills, concerns I've raised here in the House. Hoifs -- I was very pleased last Thursday the Minister introduced the new rebate for Ontario electricity consumers act to reduce electricity rates for Ontarian consumers. Speaker, this government has passed -- spent the last 10 years making much needed investments in our electricity system to ensure it's clean, safely and reliable. These efforts included completely eliminating dirty coal as a generating source from our system. This remains the single largest climate change initiative in North America and today our electricity supply is 90% emissions free. The Minister has introduced legislation as part of a package to build on these efforts by increasing affordability of electric trusty for all Ontarians. Speaker, Thu you to the Minister can you please tell this House what the impacts of these renewed efforts will be for people across the province and my constituents in Davenport?

>> Min. Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank member for that question and for her tireless work for the people in her riding of Davenport. There are three elements to our plan to increase affordability for the -- for Ontarians and the first is to permanently rebate the provincial portion of the H.S.T. Of the bills, 5 million families, farms and small businesses right across the province. The average savings from this rebate will be about \$130 per year. The second is to increase support to the most rural customers in order to help with higher distribution costs in these areas. Together with the first rebate, this will represent about \$540 per year in savings for these families, Mr. Speaker. Third, Mr. Speaker, is to expand assets for industrial customers to the industrial conservation incentive. Over 1,000 Ontario businesses. Will be newly eligible for this program which can reduce their bills by as much as one third, Mr. Speaker. We're making sure. Clean, reliable and affordable.

>> MPP Martins: To the Minister for those answers. I know that these programs will be a significant step for the families and businesses in Davenport and across Ontario. I understand the measures the ministry is proposing will be in addition to existing efforts and programs to reduce costs for electricity bills. This government has taken considerable action to reduce costs at the system level, including renegotiating the green energy investment agreement, saving \$3.7 billion and deferring the construction of new nuclear reactors at Darlington, saving \$15 billion. Just as important as these system-wide efforts are the targeted programs our government will offer families like those who live in Davenport. Speaker through you to the Minister, would you inform the House on what pre-existing programs the ministry offers to all Ontarian families for their electricity bills?

>> Min. Thibeault: Mr. Speaker, it's important to mention that on top of what we're doing from the

throne speech, we're actually moving forward on a number of our initiatives that we've had in place to designed and in place to help Ontarian families with their bills. The Ontario electricity support program introduced this year provides targeted support to low-income House holds, Mr. Speaker. More than 135,000 Ontarians are already receiving this benefit. The low income energy assistance plan introduced in 2011 is another program designed to help those who need it most. It provides onetime grants of emergency assistance to customers temporarily unavailable -- unable to make end meet. And yet another program I know that's important to me and many northern MPP S, the northern Ontario energy credit. It provides assistance to low to moderate-income individuals and families living in northern Ontario. Qualifying families receive up to \$224 per year. Mr. Speaker, the goal of this government, the goal as the energy Minister, I'm very proud to ensure we have affordable access for all --

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