

Hansard: Tabuns to Thibeault -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> MPP Tabuns: Thank you, Speaker. Speaker, my question to the **Premier**. Last week crista wrote to the NDP To tell us about her soaring hydro bills. She lives in Nipissing and she's on a fixed income of \$800 per month. The hydro bill she sent us was for \$451.51. How does the **Premier** expect crista to live and pay hydro at the same time when her bills are so high?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, I'm very pleased to rise and talk about Ontario's fair hydro plan that is coming, Mr. Speaker. That's going to help individuals like the individual that the Honourable member mentioned. Come this summer, Mr. Speaker, once we get the legislation through this House, Mr. Speaker, we could see up to 25% in reductions for families like that, Mr. Speaker, for individuals like that was mentioned. On top of that, Mr. Speaker, if this person is a Hydro One customer or another customer of one of the other six utilities that we have identified, their distribution costs are going to come down significantly, Mr. Speaker, bringing forward their rate of reduction to anywhere between 40 and 50%, Mr. Speaker. That is huge relief, Mr. Speaker, for these types of families. On top of that, we expanded the Ontario electricity support program adding another 50% and actually make it loosening the rules so more people will qualify. That is a significant saving of \$5.54 on top of that, Mr. Speaker.

>> MPP Tabuns: Thank you, Speaker. Again to the **Premier**. Crista already takes advantage of the Ontario electricity support program. The rural rate protection program is exempt from being charged for debt retirement. She still has to choose between paying her hydro bills and buying food. Clearly the **Premier** and her Liberal government aren't doing enough for people like crista. When will the **Premier** stop with the partisan posturing and actually present, present, a detailed plan in the legislature to fix the system she has helped to create in our hydro system?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, as I mentioned earlier, the Ontario electricity support program that the member mentioned that this individual has been able to take advantage of, Mr. Speaker, has increased by 50%. That will be a significant savings for this family and with the rrrp, if you put that together, Mr. Speaker, this is significant savings that families are going to see, individuals are going to see, you know, come summer, Mr. Speaker. That's when our system peaks in terms of cost and generation. We're going to make sure, Mr. Speaker, we are helping these families. There are other programs in place through the Ontario fair hydro plan that are actually going to help families and individuals. On top of the 25% every small business is going to

qualify for we're bringing forward an affordability fund that will actually help them drop their bills even further, Mr. Speaker.

>> MPP Tabuns: Again for the **Premier**, the **Premier** has not tabled legislation in this House so that Ontario families and businesses know when or if relief is coming. The only thing the **Premier** has done to deal with exorbitant hydro rates in the province is announced that maybe sometime in the vague future she will burden our kids and grand kids with an additional \$40 billion in debt that they will have to pay off. When will the **Premier** do something to help people like crista and thousands of families, businesses, that are suffering under the crushing weight of their hydro bill?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, very pleased to come and talk about what we are going to do for families and individuals like crista. 25% off on average on their bills by their bills, Mr. Speaker, by summer. If they are rrrp customers, between 40 and 50%, Mr. Speaker, by summer. Enhanced oesp, 50%. On reserve first nation individuals, Mr. Speaker, seeing their distribution costs waived at \$85 a month savings for these families, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, that is very clear relief that is coming for families right across the province. But I know the Honourable member used the term vague. The only party that has a vague plan, Mr. Speaker, is the third party. It's a vague plan, Mr. Speaker, with pie in the sky thinking, nothing to do to help families or low income individuals.

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