

Hansard: Vanthof to Thibeault -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> MPP Vanthof: Thank you, Speaker. My question's to the **Premier**. The upcoming may 24 weekend otherwise known as the may run weekend is a rite of passage in northern Ontario. And camping is a big part of our culture in the north. And one of the most beautiful places, there's many beautiful place - - places but one of the most beautiful places is the river valley park, close to river valley. Tony gabor and his family have owned and operated this park for years. But they are being squeezed by hydro costs. Last year, for the same amount of power, their costs went up by \$2,400. The same amount of power. Why is this government -- has this government ignored the plight of struggling small businesses like Tony in river

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not knowing the specifics of the business, the small business that the Honourable member is talking about, but one good news, Mr. Speaker, that I can say to him to tell to those constituents is that the Ontario fair hydro plan, if passed, will bring forward 25% reduction for all 500,000 small businesses right across our province, Mr. Speaker. And then of course there's, you know, folks that live in the rural and remote parts of northern Ontario. And he is right, Mr. Speaker, that the red river area and throughout parts of northeastern Ontario is the beautiful part of our province. These families are going to see a 40 to 50% reduction on their electricity bills, Mr. Speaker. And that's all thanks to us bringing forward the triple R.P., the rural remote rate protection plan, Mr. Speaker, . We've increased that from \$20. To \$60 to \$135 on average for a Hydro One r2 customer, Mr. Speaker. That is significant relief on top of the 25% reduction.

>> MPP Vanthof: Again to the **Premier**. River valley park is a place where northern families have come for years to relax and enjoy nature. They're also struggling to pay their own hydro bills. I guess the question they all want to ask is so how much is their power going to go up after the quote-unquote fix for the next election? How much is it going to go up after the four years? How much is their power going up? You should know, Minister. How much is their power going up?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, it's going down by 25% if we actually can get

the opposition to actually vote in favour of this, Mr. Speaker. And those families that are in his area when I know the Minister of agriculture was just up there, Mr. Speaker, talking about some great work that we're doing and talk about agriculture, Mr. Speaker, in that part of our great province. They were talking about the 40 to 50% reduction that they're going to see on top of that. Mr. Speaker, we've got the 2017 long-term energy plan that is going to come out in the very near future, projecting where energy costs and electricity costs are going to go, Mr. Speaker. But rest assured, we are going to do everything we continue to do, Mr. Speaker, to pull costs out of the system. We've got market renewal happening. We've got market reform. We've got a capacity option, Mr. Speaker. All of these things, all of these items will continue to take costs out of the system. Because we have a plan, Mr. Speaker, a plan that will work for all families no matter where they live in our great province.

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