

Bliss story

From: "Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)" <colin.nekolaichuk@ontario.ca>
To: "@OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management" <opo-mediarelationsandissuesmgmt@msgov.gov.on.ca>
Cc: "Berry, James (ENERGY)" <james.berry5@ontario.ca>, "Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY)" <kevin.denheijer@ontario.ca>
Date: Thu, 30 Nov 2017 13:53:25 -0500

Hi all,

Just a quick note to let you know that Paul Bill will likely be doing a story on the NDP claims that the Fair Hydro Plan rate reduction shouldn't be on electricity bills. Below is a transcript of the conversation between Bliss and our Minister after QP. I've since chatted with him as well, reminding him of the OEB's communications activities around RPP updates, which let people know of any changes to TOU rates.

Can you respond to the NDP saying the government is using hydro bills as election documents by including the FHP and telling how much people have saved?

So you're talking about the new bill design from Hydro One?

Correct.

So Hydro One has this pilot project in which we removed all the regulations and allowed them to bring forward a bill that they have said they're gonna research, and they researched it and what they've said for clarity is people have asked for this. I'll take my Minister of Energy hat off and put my MPP for Sudbury hat on and we, our office gets asked this all the time. It's clarity, and this is something that Hydro One chose to put on the bill.

So neither you nor anyone in the Ministry has ordered the utility companies to put the FHP discount on the bill?

So with Hydro One, that was a complete pilot project, we removed all regulation, there were pieces in the past that we would regulate as government and they would put on, but this was a wide-open process that Hydro One did for clarity, and looking at what people were saying, they wanted clarity on what their bills were all about.

So does that mean there's been no government instruction on what to put on the bill?

It was an opportunity for them to do what they thought was best.

Will other utilities be putting the FHP discount on their bills?

So I think we're one step ahead on that because we've asked the bill redesign committee to learn from the experiences of Hydro one because what we want to do is be as clear as possible and help people understand their bills, so the bill redesign committee is moving forward. And let's not forget that the OEB will start to play a major role in this and will look at how this is going to roll out. But for now we've given Hydro One the opportunity to actually be a pilot project. But in the future the OEB will be reviewing what's going on the bills as well.

Is this brave new world going to allow for price increases to be included in the box as well?

Anything that relates to the bill, the bill redesign committee is looking at how this is going to clarify for customers because clarity is key. Right now I'm excited about the bill design Hydro One has come up with because it is providing the clarity pieces that customers need.

Then shouldn't any future price increases be shown and explained?

There will be boxes available for explanation on understanding what the bill is about. Delivery charge – I know that's one, we've talked about that many times. There'll be an explanation for

delivery charge, there'll be an explanation for line loss. But we don't want to overcrowd the bill because that's what we're hearing right now, that the bill has so many pieces on it that it's hard to understand. We want to take a step back, I think that's what Hydro One has done, providing the clarity for people to really understand their bills.

Do you think at this stage, people might allow for a little more crowding if there's a box that says this is how much your bill is going up? This is why it's going up?

So right now we know the bill is going down 25 per cent because of the FHP and is being held to inflation for four years. The process being run through right now is through the bill redesign committee, they're making sure this will be clear and then the OEB will have a say in this as well.

Colin Nekolaichuk | Press Secretary
Office of the Hon. Glenn Thibeault | Minister of Energy
T: 416-325-2690 C: 647-504-4928
colin.nekolaichuk@ontario.ca