

Energy Issues - November 24

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Date: Fri, 24 Nov 2017 07:56:04 -0500

Good morning,

Please find below Energy's issues for the day:

1) Hydro One Pre-Paid Meters

- Protecting Ontario's energy consumers and ensuring greater fairness across the energy system are top priorities for our government.
- Hydro One is exploring this technology as an effort to ensure more customer choice.
- Hydro One has informed me that no customer would be put on any type of payment plan without their consent.
- No residential customer will be without power during the winter months, regardless of the type of meter they may choose to have in the future.
- This initiative is just one of the options Hydro One is examining to offer their customers more choice on how they manage their electricity accounts.
- Additionally it's important to note that this is a project within an application before the independent Ontario Energy Board.
- The Board ensures that consumers are treated fairly, and is responsible for rules and codes that energy companies must follow.
 - This includes a rule that customers cannot have their electricity supply disconnected without being given 10 days' notice.

What We've Done

- Our government's Fair Hydro Plan has lowered electricity bills by 25 per cent on average for residential customers, and up to half a million farms and small businesses.
- Part of our plan also included expanding protections for vulnerable customers through the Ontario Electricity Support Program.
- And this spring we took additional action when we introduced and passed legislation to ban utilities from disconnecting customers during the winter months.
- This action is part of our Government's commitment to ensuring affordable access to our clean, reliable electricity system.
- The Ontario Energy Board has now permanently banned winter disconnections, ensuring that no one in the province will go without power during the winter months.
- Additionally it was this government that introduced the Energy Consumer Protection Act, and updated it in 2015 by:
 - Banning door-to-door sales for energy contracts;
 - Increasing consumer representation in Ontario (OEB) proceedings, and;
 - Enhancing the authority of the OEB to further protect electricity ratepayers by boosting consumer protection.

NDP OPO

- We've done all this, and meanwhile the third party continues to have no credible plan.

- They want to buy back shares of Hydro One at a cost of billions, using money that otherwise would go to hospitals and schools.
- While the third party is busy fear mongering about the electricity system, our government will continue to ensure the protection of energy consumers across the province.

2) Gilles Bison is in the Media Studio to talk about regulating gas prices

- Our government is committed to ensuring a fair, reliable and affordable supply of energy for people across the province.
- Across the province, gasoline and diesel are vital for transporting families and goods where they need to go – to school, to work, to the grocery store and the doctor's office.
- The Minister of Energy wanted to ensure that our government does everything it can to ensure that gas prices are as transparent as possible across the province.
- That is why last November the Minister asked the independent Ontario Energy Board to study the gasoline market in the province to better understand the price at the pump, and price variations between different parts of the province.
- The report, released last week, is the product of broad consultations with industry, stakeholders and consumers.
- Most importantly, the report finds that consumers in other Canadian provinces with regulated gas prices pay more for gas than they likely would without regulation. The report confirms that regulating gas prices, as the NDP is calling for, would hurt consumers right across the province.
- Our government intends to use this information to inform our decision making going forward, as we continue to focus on making life fairer in all parts of the province.

Thank you,

Kevin Den Heijer | MPP Liaison

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