

Hansard: Brown to Premier (Thibeault) -- Hydro One Salaries

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. The O.E.B. Smacked down Hydro One's outrageous executive salaries. In that ruling, they said Ontario shouldn't be on the hook for what they called unreasonably high compensation. And I hear some members of the government laughing at this. It's not a laughing matter. This confirms what we've been saying all along. Hydro One salaries are out of touch. A \$4.4 million salary for the C.E.O. Of Hydro One is absolutely unreasonable. The C.E.O. Makes ten times what C.E.O.S make in other provinces. So, Mr. Speaker, will the Premier rein in these salaries? Will she bring them in line with other provinces, yes or no?

>> Premier Wynne: I not Minister of energy will want to comment on the specifics of this, but just to be clear, what was being said on this side of the House as the leader of the opposition was asking his question is that we're actually -- no one was laughing. In fact it was just a statement that the system is working, Mr. Speaker. This is exactly the o.e.b.'s real, Mr. Speaker, and so as I said the Minister will speak to the details. What we know, Mr. Speaker, is that people across this province have seen on average a 25% reduction in their electricity bills in some of the rural communities, Mr. Speaker, up to a 40 to 50% reduction. We knew that there was a challenge for many people in the province because of all of the investments that we have had to make, Mr. Speaker, to rebuild the electricity system. We've reduced those costs, Mr. Speaker. As I said the O.E.B. Has a job to do and they are doing it.

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the Premier. You know the Liberals were willing to back up the Brinks truck to the Hydro One executive office week. They traded a millionaire's club, Mr. Speaker, a millionaire club of Hydro One executives, and frankly if the increases are only stopping because the opposition brought it to light. So, Mr. Speaker, we still know only about a handful of these million-dollar salaries, because the government has kept secret these salaries. They've removed them from the sunshine list. So a very specific question for the Premier. It's time to change this stat. Will the Premier commit to releasing the salaries of all high-priced executives at Hydro One? Once again yes or no, Speaker ?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to Hydro One salaries, Mr. Speaker, it is now a publicly traded company, as the opposition well knows, and decisions over compensation are not made directly by the government. But what's interesting, Mr. Speaker, is just last week that party's actually complaining about the decision of the O.E.B.. This week they're liking the decision of the O.E.B., Mr. Speaker. That is why this is a quasi -- That is why, Mr. Speaker, the O.E.B. Is a quasi-

judicial organization and our economic regulator because they have the best interests of consumers at their mandate, Mr. Speaker. And that's why this shows that the system is working, Mr. Speaker. They recognize that they're going to continue to find ways to protect consumers with this, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to adding more in the supplementary.

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the Premier, I can't get a commitment to return million-dollar hydro executives back to the sunshine list they dodge and deflect that question. But the Minister of energy wants to talk about what happened last week and I welcome that, Mr. Speaker. Guess what happened last week? Rates are still going up. Another rate hike. It is ee unbelievable. It turns out these investments the Minister always claims were made into the system were actually just contracts handed out to Liberal-friendly firms. The system is still in desperate need of repair. So, Mr. Speaker, why is this government spending \$5.5 million on vanity -- Rates are going down. We just found out last week that rates are going up again. Can we please have an answer that, Mr. Speaker ?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So let's talk about what's coming down, Mr. Speaker. 25% on everyone's bills is coming down, Mr. Speaker. No part in thanks to this government and no support from the opposition. But let's be clear, Mr. Speaker. We've made sure we're holding the rates to inflation, Mr. Speaker. There will be nothing more than inflation. And when we're talking about Hydro One's draft rate order, it's estimated that the bill impact for 2017 would be an increase -- Would be a bill increase of 0.1% and 0.2% for 2018, Mr. Speaker. But that said, let me remind the opposition, Mr. Speaker, that the fair hydro plan has lowered bills by 25% on average per House hold and for over 500,000 small businesses and farms right across the country, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to do what's right for the people of --

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