

Hansard: Brown to Thibeault -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

From: "Jonsson, Rachel (CAB)" <rachel.jonsson2@ontario.ca>
To: "Codd-Downey, Beckie (GHLO)" <beckie.codd-downey@ontario.ca>, "Ernesaks, Andrea (OPO)" <andrea.ernesaks3@ontario.ca>, "Forgione, Andrew (OPO)" <andrew.forgione@ontario.ca>, "Killorn, Bill (OPO)" <bill.killorn@ontario.ca>, "Lazarus, Jordan (OPO)" <jordan.lazarus@ontario.ca>, "McPhail, Blane (OPO)" <blane.mcphail@ontario.ca>, "Sumi, Craig (CAB)" <craig.sumi@ontario.ca>
Date: Wed, 25 Oct 2017 11:10:44 -0400

INSTANT HANSARD

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the Minister of energy. The Liberals, according to the auditor general, have been accused of making up their own accounting rules. Let me repeat, making up their own accounting rules. What worries me is what else they may be hiding, Mr. Speaker. They seem to be making up their own recension rules -- retention rules on the play fly. They certainly don't seem to be keen to release emails to the auditor general. Since they don't want to apologize for this blatant attempt to discredit the independent legislative officer, at the very least, will they do what they said they'd do, be transparent, release the e-mails, stop hiding 99% of those emails? Will this dough the right thing and release the emails requested?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is our government's commitment to continue to work with the auditor general, to continue to be open and transparent. And we're going to continue to co-operate with her office. Now it's important for me to say, Mr. Speaker, that I've just been informed by my ministry that, as of Monday, October 23rd, the ministry has provided 30,126 records to the auditor general. That's in addition to the 1,200 from the ieso, the hundreds from O.P.G., the over 3,000 from the Ontario financing authority. The treasury board I know the president of the treasury board and the treasury board have provided thousands of records, Mr. Speaker. Additionally the ministry has told me we're continuing to release additional information to the auditor general, and we're doing this, Mr. Speaker, because we understand the importance of providing the auditor with everything that she's asked for and the ministry will continue to regularly provide. The auditor general with additional responsive documents each week until this process is finished, Mr. Speaker .

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the Minister of energy. Yesterday the Minister of energy said, I quote -- he doesn't expect a ticker tape parade for how the Liberals handled the hydro file. That's a stretch. That's certainly no surprise. They can't line up for a parade because they're lining up for food banks right now in Ontario and unemployment insurance. People can't afford to pay their hydro bills. People are living in energy poverty. Right now the Liberals -- Mr. Speaker, right now the Liberals laugh when I say people are living in energy poverty. The more I travel in this province the more I hear examples of people who are struggling, beyond struggling to pay their hydro bill. It's not a laughing matter. This latest \$4 billion is just the cherry on the top of their hydro crisis, a crisis that you created, a crisis this government created. So my question is when are we going to get meaningful hydro relief? Not more spin. When are we actually going to get meaningful hydro relief for the families that you're laughing at right now?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's obvious they'll never get any relief under that party that has no idea what to do and no man, Mr. Speaker. It is ee ridiculous they continue to come up and shake their fist and talk about doing something for the people of Ontario, but instead they vote against real relief. Real relief, Mr. Speaker, is 25% off every single House hold in this province. They voted against it. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, we announced \$100 million affordability fund. This is going to help tens of thousands of people in this province. Do you know who voted against that, Mr. Speaker ? That member and that party. You know what, Mr. Speaker ? We know that the only people that are lining up to see something are their members to find out what they're going to do. They have no idea, Mr. Speaker. We have talked about things that we have been doing in the 237 days that they've offered nothing. We are introducing a minimum wage increase, Mr. Speaker. They voted against. Prescriptions. All prescriptions for people 25 and under, Mr. Speaker, they voted against. The only people that are waiting in line are –

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the Minister of energy. Deleting emails is not a plan. Borrowing is not a plan. Hiding debt is not a plan. The relief that Ontario families want, they are not getting, and the government spin about this latest \$4 billion they're wasting, that spin doesn't add up. The government continues to tout that accounting firms support this Liberal scheme. What they failed to mention is the government hired those firms. They contract out to get the answers they want. They are bee hoenld to the government. The auditor general is not. She isn't in the pocket of the Liberals. We get the truth from the auditor general. While the taxpayers foot the bill for millions for Liberal spin. So, Mr. Speaker, my question is very specific and hopefully I can get an answer. How much do the Liberals spend to fight the auditor general's report? How many dollars did you put into this fake spin?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What's appalling is the leader of the opposition will sully the names of world-class organizations like KPMG, like deloitte, like lan wise. I know all Conservatives from the past are rolling over in their grave, Mr. Speaker, to hear that coming from that party. You know at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, we've ensured that we've talked with world-class organizations that are slookd at our accounting standards, Mr. Speaker. The government standards are prepared in accordance with the public cycle tore accounting standards and will continue to follow these standards for the transactions resulting from the fair hydro plan in 2017 and 2018 and in future years, Mr. Speaker. In relation to regulated accounting, psac is silent and does not prohibit the use of rate regulated accounting. Maybe that party should actually do a little research and talk with some of these firms before they accuse them of what he just did, Mr. Speaker. That is shameful.

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