

Hansard: Brown to Thibeault -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of energy. Based on the Liberal Cabinet document leak that shows hydro rates are going to skyrocket, I want to ask a very direct question to the Minister of energy. What will hydro rates be in Ontario in 2022? The document says they're going to skyrocket. Please correct the record. Tell us what hydro rates will be, what type of increase are we going to see in 2022?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again we've been talking about what we're going to do in the short term which is bring about 25% reduction. Oh, I know, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to the medium term -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the medium term for the next four years, we're holding our thoughts and rates of increases, Mr. Speaker, to the rate of inflation. The 2017 long-term energy plan. By 2022, Mr. Speaker. I'm hoping we might see something from them that relates to a plan because I think it will take them that long, Mr. Speaker.

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the Minister of energy. And he had a very revealing remark there. He said we're only focused on the short term. Surprise, surprise, Mr. Speaker. What's happening next year, it's an election and that's what costs Ontarians every time. They come up with gimmicks. They come up with games to create a House of cards and Ontario ends up paying more. Remember when we had the gas plant? Every time they're concerned about elections and not the long-term costs for Ontario, Ontarians pay more. So, Mr. Speaker, according to this Liberal document, this Liberal Cabinet document, by 2024. Electricity prices will reach a record high in Ontario. So my question to the Minister of energy, this document says we'll reach a record high in 2024. Is that correct? 2024 your document. This government's document says it will be a record high. Please tell us otherwise.

>> Minister Thibeault: That's incorrect, Mr. Speaker. The 2017 long-term energy plan is still being worked on, Mr. Speaker. We're still making sure that we're going to pull costs out of the system. And I know they have a hard time understanding anything about the electricity, Mr. Speaker, because they don't even have a plan. They first started talking about a five-point plan, then a three-point plan. And then a zero-point plan, Mr. Speaker. I not people of Ontario can't wait for a magic weekend in November. That's why we're bringing forward legislation, if passed, will reduce rates by 25%. That will help families, small businesses and farms. We got oesp program, Mr. Speaker. We have a first nation on reserve reduction, Mr. Speaker. These are things that are helping families. They've got nothing in their plan, Mr. Speaker. They don't even have --

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the Minister of energy. This Liberal Cabinet document that shows hydro rates are going to skyrocket is so disappointing. I think many Ontarians hope that when the Liberals said they're finally going to address their own hydro mess that maybe we would have seen executive salaries be reined in. Maybe we would have seen the government say we were wrong to Collect \$1.3 million in donations from the 30 magna renewable contracts. That was bad policy. Maybe they would have apologized to Ontarians. Instead right now we've got an election

gimmick. As the Minister of energy said himself, this is about the short term. I'm concerned about the long term. I'm concerned that our hydro rates are going to continue to skyrocket, and their own document says that. Actually, 2022 it goes up. 2024 it goes up. In your own document, in 2028 it's going to jump 10%. Mr. Speaker, families can't afford this. When are we actually going to address the structural problems in hydro? When will this government actually clean up their own mess?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A, structural changes are being done right now by our system operator with market renewal, market reform and a capacity option, Mr. Speaker. We're already two steps ahead of this party on many things, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the electricity file, we've even got a plan bringing forward serious reductions for all families. You know what, Mr. Speaker, a 25% reduction in the short term and in the medium term is something that families in this province want and need, and we're delivering, Mr. Speaker. A 40 to 50% reduction for families that live in the rural and northern parts of our province. That is something they need in the short term and in the medium term and we're delivering, Mr. Speaker. And when it comes to the long term, Mr. Speaker, the only thing that is going long term right now is we're 76 days without them putting one iota, one idea on the table about what to do. We've got a long-term plan coming. The 2017 long-term energy plan will continue to address and pull costs out of the system.

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