

Hansard: Brown to Premier -- Hydro Rate Reduction

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the **Premier**. Ontario families are working harder, paying more and getting less. But this summer, Hydro One applied for yet another rate increase. A rate increase that could cost families, Ontario families \$141 more per year. Mr. Speaker, will the **Premier** promise to stop yet another rate hike?

>> **Premier Wynne:** Thank you very much. I want to start by welcoming all members back to the legislature. I know I know how hard everyone works over the summer in their constituencies and I want to acknowledge that and to welcome everyone back to do this part of our job in the legislature. And, Mr. Speaker, I know that the member opposite is very aware that people across the province saw a 25% reduction in their electricity bills this summer, Mr. Speaker. And you know as we do that that makes it much fairer for people across the province, particularly people in rural and remote areas who saw up to a 40 to 50% reduction, Mr. Speaker. The reality is -- the reality is, Mr. Speaker, that -- Facing many challenges in this province, and we have a responsible and a fair plan to address those -- Fair hydro plan is part of that. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, I asked the **Premier** a question about the proposed Hydro One rate hike, which is entirely in the government's power to stop. They've had 100 plus Ministerial directives where they've been interfere and meddle in the energy market in Ontario. Now there's a rate increase \$141 that Ontario families can't pay and the **Premier's** saying nothing. The **Premier's** not going to stop it so I will ask again, will the **Premier** do the right thing and stop this hydro rate hike?

>> **Premier Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of travelling the province this summer, and all over the province I was talking to folks and hearing from them about changes that we're making, Mr. Speaker. There are more than 180,000 young people in postsecondary today paying zero tuition. **Because of the -- because of the** osap changes that we made, Mr. Speaker. We have people in this province who have seen 200, \$300 reductions on their electricity bills, Mr. Speaker, because our fair hydro plan. Across the province, residents have seen at least a 25%, 23 to 25% reduction on their electricity bills, Mr. Speaker. So we recognize that there are challenges that people are confronting. That's exactly why we have a fair hydro plan. That's exactly why we have reduced tuition and made it free for young people across the province, Mr. Speaker. Those are the results that --

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the **Premier**. I asked a question about the hydro rate hike and the **Premier** starts talking about tuition. Just for once it would be nice if the **Premier** answered the serious concerns that Ontario families have. Here we have a \$141 hydro rate hike at a

time when the government promised relief. And what's unbelievable and disappointing is that the time they're trying to grab more money for hydro, Hydro One's about to pay \$6.7 billion for an American energy company and the evista C.E.O. Says this allows them to spread the cost burden out. Spread the cost burden out? Does that mean Ontario ratepayers would be subsidizing ratepayers in Washington and Montana? So maybe, for a third time, maybe the **Premier** can say yes or no, is she going to block that hydro rate hike?

>> **Premier** Wynne: So as I said, Mr. Speaker, the leader of the opposition knows that people have seen reductions on their electricity bills. He also knows that rate hikes are being held at inflation for the next four years, Mr. Speaker. **Premier** Wynne: Mr. Speaker, the fair hydro plan put in place today on average 25% reduction for people across the province and for four years hold any increases at inflation. So, Mr. Speaker, I would say to the leader of the opposition, who has not brought forward a plan in any way, Mr. Speaker, to deal with electricity prices, that this is a fair plan and it helps people across the province. Mr. Speaker, I would also say to the leader of the opposition that, on top of that, we have got in place programs to help people who are living -- Income, Mr. Speaker. He knows in rural and northern communities people are seeing a 40 to 50% reduction, Mr. Speaker.

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