

Hansard: Horwath to Premier -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question's for the **Premier**. Does the **Premier** believe it's fair for Hydro One to Jack up delivery rates by 20% at the same time as hydro executives get a multimillion-dollar raise?

>> **Premier Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, we are reducing people's hydro bills around this province by 25%, Mr. Speaker. There's already an 8% reduction in place. On top of that another 17%, Mr. Speaker. We recognized that people across the province need help with their electricity bills. We recognized that, with the 8% that was not enough. There needed to be more. Mr. Speaker, we also recognized that people outside of dense urban areas so in more remote and rural areas need more support, Mr. Speaker, so they will see not a 25% reduction, but in some instances a 40 or 50% reduction, Mr. Speaker. That is going to happen this summer. Those are real impacts of the plan that we've brought forward, Mr. Speaker, that will help people in their lives to make sure they can pay their bills and look after their families. That's the steps we are taking, Mr. Speaker.

>> Andrea Horwath: Yesterday the **Premier** and her Minister of energy defended Hydro One c.e.o.'s 500% salary increase saying it was because they introduced e-billing. I'm not sure if that was a joke or not, Speaker. Because let's be honest. The biggest news coming out of Hydro One is that they want to have an increase of delivery rates by 20%. That's the biggest news coming out of Hydro One. Will the **Premier** tell Ontario families whether she thinks Hydro One's C.E.O. Should be getting a 500% raise?

>> **Premier Wynne:** Well, Mr. Speaker, as I have said many times, I know that these are high salaries. I understand that. The focus of our initiative, Mr. Speaker, has been on reducing people's hydro bills, giving them a break, Mr. Speaker, because we recognize that the building that we have done, the investments that had to be made, Mr. Speaker, because the electric trusty system was in shambles, that there's a cost associated with those, Mr. Speaker, and so we've been removing costs from the electricity system. We recognize that wasn't enough, and so now, this summer, people will see a 25% reduction on their electricity bills. And, Mr. Speaker, outside of the urban areas in more remote and rural areas, a 40 to 50% reduction, Mr. Speaker. We understand that that's what people need. That's the plan that we've brought forward and that's what we're implementing, Mr. Speaker.

>> Andrea Horwath: There is no plan but it sounds like a bouncing ball. First it was 17. Then 25. Now it's 40 or 50. I don't think a single Ontarian believes this government.

[Applause] Hydro One has applied to Jack up delivery rates by 20% at the same time that hydro executives get multimillion-dollar raises. And the **Premier** and her Minister of energy don't seem to have a problem with this at all. When will the **Premier** stop advocating for the 1% and start advocating for the 99%?

>> **Premier Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, the 99% is exactly who are going to see a 25% reduction. And if you add 17% and 8%, Mr. Speaker, you get 25%. If you look at distribution charges that are going to be brought down in the remote and rural areas, you get that 25% up to 40 or 50%, Mr. Speaker. That's how those numbers have been calculated because those are the reductions that people are going to see on their electricity bills, Mr. Speaker. The reality is that we recognize that the costs of the investments that we have made in an electricity system that was in shambles, Mr. Speaker, that was not reliable. That was not clean, that there was a cost associated with that. That's why people will see those reductions come summer.

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