

Hansard: Horwath to Matthews -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> Andrea Horwath: This question's for the acting **Premier**, Speaker. But I think what people want to see is the government stop using precious public dollars to promote the Liberal party and Kathleen Wynne. That's what I think people want to see. Clearly the electricity companies who will be forced to deliver this politically motivated message on behalf of the **Premier** didn't think it was necessary, Speaker, or else they would have provided the information themselves on their own. Does the **Premier** know something that every electricity in the province -- somehow doesn't need to know or doesn't know? Is there something that they're aware of that every electricity company isn't aware of, Speaker?

>> Minister Matthews: Thank you, Speaker. I'm glad we're having the chance to talk about hydro prices today and I'm particularly disturbed to hear that yesterday it was announced that the NDP Will not support, in fact will repeal the bill that will bring hydro relief for people across this province. They announced yesterday that they will actually increase hydro prices, that they will take the 25% back, Speaker, that the 40% that many people in rural and northern Ontario, relief that they will get will be rescinded under the NDP. They said the Ontario electricity support program that provides energy relief for the most vulnerable in this province will be repealed. Speaker, it's no surprise that the opposition is asking about our insert in an envelope because they are not prepared to talk about their plan. To repeal this whole bill.

>> Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Speaker. We replaced it with a plan that actually creates systemic change and bringing --S Hydro One back into public hands and creates savings for the long term for people of Ontario. It's really shocking actually. We announced this almost a month ago and the Minister just realized yesterday that this was the NDP's position? Shame on her. Look, when the **Premier** forces electricity companies, Speaker, to do something that they deem unnecessary, it's a political tactic, plainly and simple. That tactic is meant to harness the power of the office of the **Premier** for political gain. There is no way around that fact. And it's time the **Premier** takes responsibility for this manipulation. Will she revoke the regulation now and apologize to the people of Ontario for misusing the power of her office?

>> Minister Matthews: Speaker, let's be really clear. The MPP Wants to the cancel the decreases to hydro prices for the people of Ontario. That in my opinion is a shameful position for the third party to be taking. They claim they will replace it with something but they have no idea what they are going to replace it with, Speaker. But what we do know for sure that it will take away relief from the people of this province. And they will also take money from health and from education, because part of their plan is to buy back the shares in Hydro One, Speaker. Let's just be really clear. Anyone who is watching, anyone who is paying attention to this, the NDP Want to increase your hydro bill. They want to take away the support for the most vulnerable people. They want to take away the -- The delivery costs for on reserve first nations, Speaker, and now --

>> **Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, I think you can get your bottom dollar that every person in Ontario is watching the mess the Liberals have made of our electricity system and what it's costing people today and for generations to come. The F.A.O., the financial accountability officer, an independent officer of this legislature, said that the **Premier's** \$45 billion hydro borrowing scheme will cost Ontarians, will cost Ontario families and businesses more money and that it will actually drive bills up. Now that's not me as a partisan saying that. That's the financial accountability officer. There is no hiding the fact, Speaker. Even though it's conveniently excluded from the **Premier's** regulation forcing companies to promote her and her political party. The **Premier** has decided to use her position, her office as **Premier**, to mandate that the Liberal party's politically motivated description of this scheme is delivered to Ontario doorsteps regularly now and throughout the next election.

>> Minister Matthews: You know, Speaker, for months in this House the third party came with examples of people who were really suffering with high electricity prices. Speaker, we heard those stories in our own ridings, too. We went to work. We rolled up our sleeves and we developed a plan that will provide immediate relief, 25% reduction electricity bills, Speaker, and more than that for people who are paying the highest rates. We have a plan. We've been very transparent about that plan. It's a plan that reduces electricity bills, and to think that the NDP Party will stand in their place day after day after day after day to complain about a problem and then when we develop a solution say no to that, Speaker, without coming up with their own is just not ok. We've got a plan. —it wil—

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