

Hansard: Horwath to Premier (Thibeault) -- Hydro Rebate

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> **Andrea Horwath:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Speaker, two weeks ago the **Premier** said that Ontarians would get a break on their hydro bills. People were hopeful that things would change, but instead of taking the H.S.T. Off bills, the government is creating a rebate that we all know could disappear at any time. And instead of being just the first step to get bills down, it seems to be the only step, Speaker. People hope for so much better. Will the **Premier** take action to get bills under control and stop the privatization of Hydro One?

>> **Premier Wynne:** Well, Mr. Speaker, you know I actually would have thought the leader of the third party would have been very supportive of what we're doing, which is a permanent removal of the provincial portion of the H.S.T. From electricity bills, Mr. Speaker. It's not a rebate in the sense that people have to pay and then they will be paid back. It is coming right off the bills, Mr. Speaker. We will introduce legislation, which if passed would make that happen, Mr. Speaker. And on top of that we are working to make sure that rural customers who have very high delivery charges, Mr. Speaker, have an extra 12% reduction, Mr. Speaker, to -- upwards of 20%. We've taken action. We've also acted in terms of smaller companies, Mr. Speaker, that need support through the industrial conservation initiative, and they will be able to save up to 34% so we've taken a number of initiatives, Mr. Speaker. Because we know that people need that support.

>> **Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, people in Ontario are having trouble paying their hydro bills and they are at a breaking point. They're concerned that the **Premier** is making decisions that are more about the best headline instead of what's best for families. It was amazing that last Friday Liberal staffers were handing out leaflets at subway stops talking about rebate legislation that was barely 12 hours old, Speaker. This question is more about helping the Liberal party than it is about helping families. Will this **Premier** start making this about people instead of making it about her party?

>> **Premier Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, the decisions that we have made to help people with their electricity bills are about people, Mr. Speaker. It's about their lives every day helping people in the same way, Mr. Speaker, there's 100,000 child care spaces we're going to create. It's about people, Mr. Speaker. It's about people when we move to make tuition free for low-income families. All those decisions, Mr. Speaker, all those choices that we have made as a government are in response to people's concerns, and they are about helping people to deal with their lives every single day, Mr. Speaker .

>> **Andrea Horwath:** Well, Speaker, I was at the Sally Mack yesterday. I know the **Premier** and lots of her team were there, too, and so were a lot of unhappy Ontarians. They showed the **Premier** that her plan to privatize Hydro One has absolutely no public support and underlined that this government has no mandate to privatize. The next election, Speaker -- the next election is 20

months away at which point the **Premier** has an opportunity to actually get a mandate from the people. In the meantime, this **Premier** needs to stop selling shares in Hydro One. Will the **Premier** commit today to stop any further sell-off of Hydro One?

>> Min. Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the leader of the third party for that question. For us on this side of the House, we recognize how important it is to continue with jobs and growth and investment and the broadening of Hydro One will just do that, Mr. Speaker. Of course when you're talking about the three pillared plan we brought forward to help families, we want to see that implemented as fast as we can, Mr. Speaker, so people and families can continue to save on their bills. And I thought I heard that from the third party before, Mr. Speaker. When I brought forward unanimous consent to get my legislation passed quickly, do you know what happened, Mr. Speaker ? They voted against it. We want to ensure we help families and they're not helping -- families in Ontario. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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