

Hansard: Horwath to Premier -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

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Date: Wed, 17 May 2017 11:21:59 -0400

INSTANT HANSARD

>> Andrea Horwath: My next question's also for the **Premier**. In 2013 the **Premier** said this about her party's cancellation of the Oakville and Mississauga gas plants and I quote, I never said this wasn't a political decision. Ment. Will the **Premier** admit right now. That her hydro borrowing scheme is just a political decision design today try to -- Hold on to power in the next election.

>> **Premier** Wynne: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our decision to reduce people's electricity bills by 25% has everything to do with people's ability to pay their electricity bills and to manage their budgets, Mr. Speaker. That's what our plan is about. And, Mr. Speaker, we recognize that the \$50 billion of investment that has been made in the electricity system to make it clean, renewable and reliable, Mr. Speaker, investment that was necessary because previous governments have not made those investments, Mr. Speaker, and we were dealing with a degraded electricity system in 2003, we recognize that the costs associated with that needs to be spread over a longer period of time. That's what we're doing, and in doing that, Mr. Speaker, we are able to give people immediate relief, 25% reduction this summer, and, Mr. Speaker, in rural and northern communities, some people will see. A 40 to 50% reduction, Mr. Speaker. That is in response to people's need in this province. That's what the fair hydro plan is about.

>> Andrea Horwath: Last fall the **Premier** also admitted that soaring hydro bills were per his her mistake in the first place. She said and I quote, I take responsibility as leader for not paying close enough attention to some of the daily stresses in Ontarians' lives. Electricity prices are a prime example. Why is the **Premier** pushing forward, Speaker, with a hydro borrowing scheme when documents know -- documents show, rather, as she knows that it will cause hydro bills to go up even further and cause even more stress for the families and businesses that she just apologized to six months ago.

>> **Premier** Wynne: So, Mr. Speaker, I've been very clear that we were working on a number of initiatives. We removed 8%, Mr. Speaker, from people's bills. We renegotiated the Samsung contract, Mr. Speaker. We've been working on this not for months but for years to remove costs from the system because we recognize that those investments to upgrade the system were costly and had a cost associated with them. In removing 25% from people's bills, Mr. Speaker, we have said that that means that the costs will be **shared over a longer period** of time. And in the short term that 25% reduction will help people immediately. In the midterm, Mr. Speaker, we will hold those bills down to the rate of inflation, and in the long term, the long-term electricity plan, long-term energy plan is being developed we will continue to take costs out of the system. This is immediate relief, Mr. Speaker, but we recognize. That there's a longer-term plan that's needed. That plan is being developed, Mr. Speaker.

>> Andrea Horwath: Speaker, this **Premier** and this government are the plagued by scandal. The Sudbury by-election, **bribery charges**, the broken promise not to sell Hydro One, the gas plant decision and now, ramming an ill thought out hydro borrowing scheme through the House with no

F.A.O. Assessment, with just six sitting days left and very very little time for the people of Ontario to review it and most importantly when she knows it will end up costing people in this province more on their hydro bills. When will the **Premier** put an end to Liberal scandals and just admit she has no real plan to lower people's hydro bills, only another political decision.

>> **Premier** Wynne: Mr. Speaker, people across this province are going to see a 25% reduction on average between 23 and 2% reduction on average. On Nair electricity bills by summer, Mr. Speaker. People in northern and rural communities, many will see up to a 40 to 60% reduction, Mr. Speaker. On January 1st, 2018, children across this province will have access to free medication, Mr. Speaker. This fall, this September students will be going to College without having to pay tuition. Low-income families will go -- Kids will be going to university and to College and taking training programs without having to pay tuition. My job as **Premier** is to put in place plans that are real, that give people real relief and that work and have real-time --

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