

Hansard: Horwath to Premier -- Infrastructure & Hydro Rates

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> **Andrea horwath:** Mr. Speaker, my question's for the **Premier**. People want to believe in Ontario but they're losing hope. Creating a bright future is going to take action in this province, Speaker, and it's going to take action now. Monday's throne speech, sadly, was a missed opportunity. Instead of action, Ontarians got yet more disappointed, disappointed by this **Premier** and her government. People deserve opportunities for better jobs, Speaker. A life that they can afford and the services that they can count on. Why won't this government start focusing on the priorities that matter to the people of this province?

>> **Premier Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, our plan is 100% about growing the economy, creating jobs so that people can have access to those resource that is they need, Mr. Speaker, and so that we can as a government reinvest in the people in this province. Ontario is one of the leading jurisdictions in the country in terms of economic growth, Mr. Speaker. The last two years, 6% growth. Projected 2.5 and 3% growth over the next couple of years, Mr. Speaker. Our unemployment rate is below the national average. Since I've been the **Premier**, Mr. Speaker, we've created over 200,000 jobs or been part of creating 200,000 jobs in this province, Mr. Speaker. The success story that we're seeing right now, Mr. Speaker, is because of the investments that we've put in place. It's because of the plan that we have been implementing, Mr. Speaker. We're on track to balance the budget. And what that means, Mr. Speaker, is that we are able to make investments, help people in their lives every single day. Including –

>> **Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, people across Ontario see that privatizing Hydro One is something they expected the Conservatives to do. They expected that to come from a Conservative government, Speaker, not what they hoped for from this **Premier**. On Monday the government said it was, quote, dedicated to reducing electricity costs. That means stopping the privatization of Hydro One. Plain and simple, Speaker. So will the **Premier** do the right thing and stop any further privatization of Hydro One?

>> **Premier Wynne:** So, Mr. Speaker, as I said the plan that we have put in place is working. We are seeing the results of the investments that we are making and, Mr. Speaker, I have acknowledged many times that we have had to make difficult choices. We've had to make difficult decisions in terms of making the investments that are necessary. But unlike the ideological position that the leader of the third party is holding on this, Mr. Speaker, we understand that in order to be able to invest in transportation infrastructure in this province, we need the funding to be able to do that. We need those resources and so, Mr. Speaker, we are making those investments. We are taking an asset that has been ... by the people of Ontario and continuing to control and regulate that, Mr. Speaker. But recycling that asset so that we can make the investment that is we know people need, so that the transit, the roads, the bridges. They have those in place now so that their economies can thrive so that they can have the future that they deserve.

>> **Andrea Horwath:** Well, Speaker, I didn't realize that 80% of the people of Ontario shared my

ideology. That's fantastic. In fact 80% of the people have is a shared value. And that value is the value of having Hydro One as a public asset that operates in the public interest. It's about knowing what your values are, Speaker, and sticking to them. That's what it's about. The **Premier** was asked how long -- can count on her new rebates for hydro. She said changes they're making permanently. On Tuesday arch the Minister of finance was asked the same question and he wouldn't give an answer. That actually doesn't really give us very much confidence, doesn't give the people of this province very much confidence, and so the question, Speaker, is this. Why doesn't this **Premier** just clear things up and actually take the H.S.T. Off the hydro bill once and for all?

>> **Premier Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, you know on the one hand the leader of the third party want to move quickly, and on the other hand the process she puts forward would take months and months and months to accomplish, Mr. Speaker. So we are bringing in legislation that will do exactly the same thing. It will take the provincial portion of the H.S.T. Off of people's bills, and I would hope that the leader of the third party and her team would not stand in the way of that legislation but would work with us to get that legislation passed so that we can, on January 1st, 2017, make sure that the provincial portion of the H.S.T. Is taken off people's electricity bills, Mr. Speaker .

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