

Hansard: Horwath to Thibeault -- Hydro-Rate Reduction Plan

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Date: Tue, 12 Dec 2017 10:54:19 -0500

INSTANT HANSARD

>> Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Speaker, my question's to the Deputy **Premier**. Does the **Premier** of this province and the Liberal government believe that hydro bills should have partisan Liberal advertising and include partisan Liberal flyers?

>>Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is important that all ratepayers in the province know what is on their bills, Mr. Speaker. And that's why Hydro One has a pilot project under way in which they're doing a new build redesign, Mr. Speaker, helping customers right across the province that are Hydro One customers understand their bills and some of the complexity of the bills, Mr. Speaker. Knowing that they're getting a 25% reduction on their bills is important, Mr. Speaker. It's the same thing like the debt retirement charge. The debt retirement charge has been eliminated for residential customers, Mr. Speaker, but hindsight being 20-20 we thought letting people know on their bills that it was no longer a cost on there but leaving it on so people could understand that was actually the opposite, Mr. Speaker. We believe making sure that we have a clear guideline for all residential custom others for all ratepayers across the province, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to work with Hydro One. continue to work with all the L.D.C.S to come up with a bill that is clear for all ratepayers right across the province.

>> Andrea Horwath: Speaker, Ontarians deserve to know why their hydro bill now includes desperate Liberal party campaign advertising. I'm going to send an order in council across the aisle to the Deputy **Premier**, who's claiming this doesn't exist. If I can get a page, please. What this does is it forces hydro companies to include Liberal campaign messaging on people's hydro bills. And the order is personally signed by the Minister of energy and the Deputy **Premier**, who also happens to be the chair of the Ontario Liberal election campaign. Can she clarify for us, Speaker, exactly which hat she was wearing when she signed that order in council?

>>Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is this Deputy **Premier**, this government who wears the hat that protects ratepayers, Mr. Speaker. It's that party over there, Mr. Speaker, that voted against the 25% reduction for every single family in this province. How can they look in the mirror, Mr. Speaker, and stand up every day and say that they're defend, the ratepayers in this province when they did absolutely nothing, Mr. Speaker ? Absolutely nothing. What they talk about right now is buying back Hydro One shares, Mr. Speaker. That's actually going to stop building hospitals, stop building schools, Mr. Speaker. That's what we're doing on this side of the House. When it comes to northern Ontario or rural customers or low-income individuals or first nations individuals, you know what they did, Mr. Speaker ? They forgot about them. They actually didn't even put them into their plan. And they can wave their finger all they want, but the truth hurts, Mr. Speaker. It's this party that protected ratepayers.

>> Andrea Horwath: Speaker, the Minister of energy and the chair of the Ontario Liberal election

campaign personally signed the order for hydro utilities to include partisan messaging in Ontario's hydro bills. Who is paying for these Liberal flyers, Speaker ? The people of Ontario or the Liberal party?

>>Minister Thibeault: An easy answer, Mr. Speaker. It's the people of Ontario, unlike the opposition. The people of Ontario is the one that we actually stand up for and --Again, Mr. Speaker, it's the people of Ontario, the 25% reduction that is this government that brought forward to help them with the relief, Mr. Speaker, because we invested \$70 billion in rebuilding the system, Mr. Speaker. We made sure that we have a supply that can actually be relied on, Mr. Speaker, bringing forward clean power, and that is something that we should all be proud of in this province. But when it comes to defending the interests of the people of Ontario, it is this government. We are building up our province and we're making sure that our electricity rates are as affordable as possible.

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