

Hansard: Singh to Premier (Thibeault) -- Hydro 25% Reduction Plan

From: "Jonsson, Rachel (CAB)" <rachel.jonsson2@ontario.ca>
To: "Appave, Priscilla (OPO)" <priscilla.appave2@ontario.ca>, "Codd-Downey, Beckie (GHLO)" <beckie.codd-downey@ontario.ca>, "Forgione, Andrew (OPO)" <andrew.forgione@ontario.ca>, "Killorn, Bill (OPO)" <bill.killorn@ontario.ca>, "Lazarus, Jordan (OPO)" <jordan.lazarus@ontario.ca>, "McPhail, Blane (OPO)" <blane.mcphail@ontario.ca>, "Sumi, Craig (CAB)" <craig.sumi@ontario.ca>
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INSTANT HANSARD

>> MPP Singh: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the **Premier**. The **Premier** has a very bad record of saying one thing to Ontarians and doing the exact opposite in reality. She promised to lower auto insurance rates by 15% before an election. But after she got re-elected, guess what, that turned out to be a stretched goal. So how can the **Premier** expect Ontarians to believe anything this government says when they promised to do the right thing before -- how can the people of Ontario expect to believe anything this **Premier** says when the **Premier** and government say one thing before election - - They promise to do the right thing before an election but they break that promise right after they get re-elected.

>> **Premier** Wynne: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We said we were going to reduce people's electric bills by 8%. That is happening. We have brought forward a plan to reduce people's electricity bills by 25%, Mr. Speaker. People will see those reductions by the summer. We have said further that people who live in remote and rural areas will see a further reduction. They will see those results, Mr. Speaker. And it's extremely important to me that we recognize that this is about people's needs. This is about the reality of electricity prices across the province. We brought forward a plan, Mr. Speaker, that will give people relief in the immediate term and, Mr. Speaker, that is more than I can say for the third-party.

>> MPP Singh: The **Premier** promised not to sell off a vital public asset before an election. Guess what happened after the government got elected. We know the government broke this promise. Making promises to the people of Ontario and then breaking them once they're re-elected does nothing more than make people cynical about the government. How can the **Premier** honestly believe after so many broken promises the people will have any faith on what this government has to say.

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very pleased to rise and respond because the first thing I get to say is we're reducing rates by 25%. Also, Mr. Speaker, this isn't more than just a proposal. This is a change that will see the rates continue to stay low for the next 4 years. We're going to continue to bring forward a long-term energy plan to continue to make sure we take costs out of the system. When you look at the NDP proposal and what they were talking about the, their biggest idea is to rebuy Hydro One shares. That will not take one cent off any of the bills, Mr. Speaker. That's why -- it doesn't take one cent off electricity bills. The Toronto star editorial says there's no evidence that keeping it public would make this particular issue any better, Mr. Speaker.

>> MPP Singh: Mr. Speaker, the reality is this proposal doesn't do anything to address the mess in the hydro system. Ontarians are right to be cynical about it. They know come June 8, 2018, if the Liberals win, the hydro rates will go right back up. The **Premier** refuses to address the real

issue. They won't stop the sell-off of Hydro One. They won't address the unfair time of use pricing or the bad contracts or the fact that we oversupply electricity and then pay foreign private companies to purchase that oversupply of electricity. This is a quick political fix to a problem the **Premier** ignored, her party ignored. They only care about it now because there's an election looming and the **Premier** has bad polling numbers. That's the reality. Ontarians know that. Will the **Premier** admit this plan will only end up costing ratepayers more in the long run.

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know the Honourable member outlined quite a few points. Let us outline quite a few points. The relief we're talking about will be substantial relief. 25% right across the board for every ratepayer. For those living in rural parts of our province, Mr. Speaker, in northern parts of the province, 800,000 House holds, they'll see the number jump up between 40 and 50%. That's significant. (Applause) As I said, Mr. Speaker, there are many things that we're doing. The important thing, Mr. Speaker, is that this relief will be lasting because it's built on real change, Mr. Speaker. It's built on real change, Mr. Speaker. It's not looking at making sure we might possibly be able to have a conversation in a few years down the road with some group we may want to make up. We're looking at plans, Mr. Speaker. We're bringing forward relief. This 25% is coming. It will help everyone in this province.