

Hansard: Tabuns to Premier (Thibeault) -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> MPP Tabuns: Thank you, Speaker. To the **Premier**. Yesterday in a self-congratulatory press conference, Minister of energy touted the Liberal government's shortsighted decision to sell off yet another batch of Hydro One shares. What he neglected to mention, though, was that the further privatization of our hydro system will ensure that hydro bills for everyday Ontario families will continue to climb. Why are the **Premier** and her Minister of energy so excited that families, who are already struggling, will be left further behind?

>> **Premier Wynne**: Mr. Speaker, I know that the member of the third party understands that building infrastructure in this province is important. He lives in an urban riding, Mr. Speaker. He represents an urban riding that needs those investments, Mr. Speaker. And in fact we continue to make investments in transit, in -- Mr. Speaker, that the net proceeds will be reinvested in new infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. I know he supports investing in infrastructure. So, Mr. Speaker, we made a decision to maximize the value of our assets in order to make those critical new infrastructure investments. We are going to continue to do that, Mr. Speaker.

>> MPP Tabuns: Thank you. Again to the **Premier**. The loss of the province's majority stake in Hydro One will cost Ontarians dearly. People's hydro bills will keep going up. And they will lose out on the service ses that revenue from Hydro One used to pay for. Our hospitals, schools, long-term care homes are already at a tipping point because of Liberal cuts. The sell-off will make the situation even worse. How can the **Premier** justify this boondoggle for bay street investors at the expense of the people of Ontario?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again pleased to rise to talk about what we're doing to continue to make rates affordable for all Ontarians across the province, Mr. Speaker. The Ontario fair hydro plan has already reduced rates by 17%. They've seen that by -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again I'll repeat rates have dropped down as of may 1st down by 17% compared to last year and by July 1st of this year, Mr. Speaker, if passed through the legislation, we will see an additional 8%, bringing that total on average to 25%. But now, Mr. Speaker, the media know. I know the opposition know. The official opposition know rates are set by the O.E.B.. It's too bad that the third party doesn't understand that component.

>> MPP Tabuns: Clearly the Minister doesn't know how energy works in this province. Speaker, the **Premier** has no mandate to sell off Hydro One. It will hurt everyday families. It will put further strain on our public services. She knows that 80% of Ontarians oppose the sell-off and yet she insists on moving forward. Why is the **Premier** allowing already wealthy bay street investors to get filthy rich off the backs of ordinary Ontario families?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's not just this party that, you know,

understands how the electricity system works, Mr. Speaker. We've been working hard with stakeholders throughout the province to come forward with a fair hydro plan that's going to reduce rates by 25%. And I know the opposition the third party, Mr. Speaker, can't understand how the O.E.B. Applies the rates. They can go to their website. It's explained there very clearly, Mr. Speaker. But the criticism what's interesting, Mr. Speaker, with their obsession with Hydro One, Mr. Speaker, is even more harsh from Tim killdack of the "Globe and mail" calls the belief that ownership of utilities in Ontario affecting rates one of the biggest misconceptions about electricity. Even Brady yanch, economist of the consumer policy institute and frequent government critic calls the idea of privatization increases rates as a straw man, Mr. Speaker. You know what? When it comes to doing right for the people of Ontario. We're building infrastructure. We're building the hospitals. We're building the schools because we have a plan to build Ontario up. Unlike the opposition parties, Mr. Speaker.

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