

Remarks for MPPs

Echo Event | Reducing Electricity Costs

September 16, 2016

- Thank you [INSERT NAME] for that kind introduction. And good [morning/afternoon] everyone.
- Thank you for joining us today.
- [VIP Acknowledgments]

- As your local MPP — and particularly, as a member of Kathleen Wynne's government — I'm excited to be here today to announce Ontario's plan to reduce electricity costs for families...for businesses - small and large - ...and in particular, announce even more relief for eligible northern, rural, and remote families.
- As I get into the details of this announcement, I want to start by taking a step back and talking a bit about how we got here.

- When our government came to power in 2003, we inherited a crumbling electricity system that was dependent on dirty coal.
- And over the last 13 years, we have been transforming and modernizing that system.
- We replaced coal with a cleaner supply. In 2015, Ontario's electricity generation was more than 90% emissions-free. Bringing an end to the regular smog days and emissions that were making our kids sick.

- And we rebuilt our transmissions and distribution system, ensuring that rolling brownouts and blackouts were a thing of the last.
- That's a record we can all be proud of – and one that sets us up for the low carbon economy of the future.
- At the same time, Ontario's government recognizes that the costs of these investments have put pressure on household and small businesses budgets.

- And we`ve heard from Ontarians that they could use a little help with the costs of everyday living – like electricity bills.
- So today I`m proud to announce that Ontario will be taking action to reduce electricity costs in a lasting, meaningful way.
- Yesterday the Minister of Energy introduced the Ontario Rebate for Electricity Consumers Act, 2016 which will rebate the provincial portion of the HST directly on electricity bill for millions of families, farms, and small businesses.

- This rebate will take effect January 1, 2017 and will provide the average Ontario family with an 8% reduction on their bill – or \$130 more in your pocket each year.
- And, I want families in more rural areas to know we`re going to do more for our most rural customers, who often pay much higher delivery charges.

- For eligible customers we will modernize the Rural or Remote Rate Protection to help equalize the delivery costs between rural and more urban communities
- These changes will reduce bills for more than 330,000 eligible customers by 20 per cent and provide savings of more than \$540 annually.
- Ontario`s government is also focused on growing our economy and creating jobs. So we want to make sure that businesses are benefiting from this plan.

- While Small Businesses will see this new rebate for the HST, larger businesses will also see benefits.
- We will expand the eligibility of existing programs that empower businesses to reduce electricity costs by one third – allowing more than one thousand new businesses to access this program.

- First started in 2011 for only the largest companies in Ontario - the Industrial Conservation Initiative empowers individual businesses to better manage their electricity use and rewards them with lower costs for reducing their electricity consumption on the warmest days of summer and the coldest days of winter.
- Expanding this program will help more than one thousand new businesses access this program and directly benefit job creators across Ontario.

[PAUSE]

- Taken together, these actions represent one of the largest single electricity support programs in the Province's history.
- And they're going to help families and businesses across the board.

- This plan builds on our government's commitment to provide affordable access to energy, including providing support for low-income families through the Ontario Electricity Support Program, expanding natural gas to more communities, and grid-connecting remote northwestern First Nations communities.

- Our focus will remain on ensuring that families, farms, and businesses of all sizes continue to benefit from a clean, reliable and affordable electricity system.
- Thank you.