

RE: Statement needed for Hoggarth by 1:30pm

From: "McPhail, Blane (OPO)" <blane.mcphail@ontario.ca>
To: "Campbell, David (ENERGY)" <david.campbell2@ontario.ca>, "@OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management" <opo-mediarelationsandissuesmgmt@msgov.gov.on.ca>
Cc: "Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)" <colin.nekolaichuk@ontario.ca>, "Berry, James (ENERGY)" <james.berry5@ontario.ca>, "Moore, Brynne (MOF)" <brynne.moore@ontario.ca>
Date: Fri, 03 Mar 2017 13:48:20 -0500

Yesterday we announced the largest cut to electricity rates in Ontario's history. Recognizing that Ontarians are struggling, we are lowering electricity bills 25 per cent on average for families, farms and small businesses. Under our plan, electricity rates will come down, stay down and benefit families and businesses across the province.

While our plan provides fast, substantial, wide-spread & long-lasting relief, Patrick Brown has yet to bring forward anything credible. His main idea – halting the broadening of Hydro One – won't take one cent off electricity bills. Energy rates will continue to be set by the independent Ontario Energy Board, which has a mandate to protect ratepayers. And Brown's push to rip up energy contracts would lead to increased rates, lawsuits, and penalties.

Under our plan, the burden will now be shared fairly. Though sharing will put some additional fiscal pressure on us, Ontario's strong, growing economy has allowed us to strengthen our fiscal position and keep our commitment to balance the budget while significantly reducing electricity bills. By providing real, long-lasting relief, our Fair Hydro Plan makes sense for Ontarians.

From: Campbell, David (ENERGY)
Sent: March-03-17 1:48 PM
To: McPhail, Blane (OPO); @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management
Cc: Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY); Berry, James (ENERGY); Moore, Brynne (MOF)
Subject: Re: Statement needed for Hoggarth by 1:30pm

Hey all, Advance needs this asap

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the Rogers network.

From: McPhail, Blane (OPO)
Sent: Friday, March 3, 2017 1:29 PM
To: Campbell, David (ENERGY); @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management
Cc: Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY); Berry, James (ENERGY); Moore, Brynne (MOF)
Subject: RE: Statement needed for Hoggarth by 1:30pm

Thx team – some changes coming shortly, hold tight

From: Campbell, David (ENERGY)
Sent: March-03-17 1:07 PM
To: @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management
Cc: Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY); Berry, James (ENERGY); Moore, Brynne (MOF)
Subject: RE: Statement needed for Hoggarth by 1:30pm

Got some feedback from Brynne for the budget comments – updated the second paragraph below.

From: Campbell, David (ENERGY)
Sent: March-03-17 12:57 PM
To: @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management
Cc: Nikolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY); Berry, James (ENERGY); Moore, Brynne (MOF)
Subject: Statement needed for Hoggarth by 1:30pm

Hey all,

MPP Hoggarth has received the following media questions from the Barrie Advance (Chris Simon), and her office has requested help drafting a response. Draft response is below. Deadline is 1:30pm.

I think the fourth paragraph is probably excessive, and am tempted to remove it. Open to whatever feedback you have.

Thanks,
David

Questions:

- 1) Why is it important to lower hydro rates now, even though doing so will cost significantly more in interest payments going forward? Will there be an impact on the Liberals' ability to balance the budget in this and future years? If not, what budget items/areas needs to be cut or altered to pay for the added interest going forward?
- 2) Patrick Brown said the following during a media conference call:
 - Details of a specific PC plan to lower rates would be coming shortly. But he was unwilling to offer a solution today.
 - He declined to say exactly when the PCs will announce specific changes to the hydro system.
 - He backed away from previous statements indicating Ontarians pay the highest hydro rates in North America. Now he says they're 'among the highest'.Do you have a rebuttal to any of this?

Statement:

"Over the last decade we have invested more than 50 billion dollars in electricity infrastructure, and today we have a system that is second-to-none. But the way we financed those investments was a mistake. We asked one generation – today's generation – to unfairly shoulder the burden of nearly all of those costs. Much like refinancing a mortgage, we are now refinancing our investments and setting a new term that stretches over a longer period. Over time, it will cost a bit more. And it will take longer to pay off. But it is fairer – because it doesn't ask this generation of hydro customers alone to pay the freight for everyone before and after. The burden will now be shared more evenly and more appropriately. In total, the average household is going to save 25% on their hydro bill.

Prudent fiscal management and a growing economy have allowed us to afford these measures. While there is no doubt that these measures put pressure on our fiscal plan, we remain on track to balance the budget this year. Our approach is about fairness, and as a result, we believe that it's worth it.

Meanwhile, Patrick Brown and the PC Party continue to put forward no plan on hydro. The few scattered suggestion they have made will have no impact on rates, or will even actually drive them up. Frankly, they seem more concerned with coming up with soundbites than with showing leadership for Ontario.

This is perfectly demonstrated by his frequently changing portrayal of the facts on electricity in Ontario. He's changed his tune on Ontario having the highest rates in North America. He has said our government is signing new energy contracts today, even though today is actually a deadline for proponents to withdraw from energy contracts. Patrick Brown has shown time and again his tendency to flip-flop on issues, and that's no different for the energy sector."

David Campbell
Legislative Assistant and Issues Manager
Office of the Hon. Glenn Thibeault | Minister of Energy

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