

Response to Horwath's TorStar op-ed

From: "Berry, James (ENERGY)" <james.berry5@ontario.ca>
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Date: Wed, 08 Mar 2017 13:31:42 -0500
Attachments: Response to NDP Hydro Plan Toronto Star Op-ed - Mach 8 2017 CN_DC.docx (24.87 kB)

Hi guys, attached and below is a draft response to Horwath's TorStar op-ed.

Let us know if you have any revisions/concerns with us sending this out. Would like to submit later today, pending approval.

Thanks!

Letter to the editor RE: NDP HYDRO PLAN GIVES MONEY TO CITIZENS, NOT BANKS
Wednesday, March 8, 2017
Words: 481 words

Glenn Thibeault, Minister of Energy

The NDP hydro scheme is short on details and long on hollow promises. Many of their proposals rely on a vague and yet-to-be-determined "expert panel" that will be convened in the future, as well as pie-in-the-sky negotiations with the federal government. These offer little to Ontarians in the short-term, compared to the real and meaningful relief our government's Fair Hydro Plan will provide to everyone starting this summer.

The NDP's most expensive idea – buying back more than \$4-billion in shares of Hydro One – will not take one cent off electricity bills. The only impacts of this misguided measure would be to line bankers' pockets and cut much needed infrastructure investments to communities across Ontario.

Over and above the 25 per cent on average electricity bill cut for every family and small business, our Fair Hydro Plan will expand the Ontario Electricity Support Program to provide targeted help to the most vulnerable Ontarians. The expanded program will deliver an additional \$180 to \$276 per year for eligible families. Meanwhile, support for low-income Ontarians doesn't even factor into the NDP plan, other than a promise to consider it in the future. Our government believes that support for the most vulnerable should be a central pillar of any energy plan, and that's why we will provide targeted and meaningful relief to those who need it most.

Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan will also eliminate the delivery charge for on-reserve First Nations customers and remove some monthly service charges. This measure will save the average customer \$85 a month and is a move that Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day has commended and acknowledged it will "allow a path forward for greater quality of life for First Nations in Ontario". Under the NDP proposal, First Nations are not mentioned once.

And as if the NDP proposal wasn't damaging enough, their scheme would scrap Time of Use pricing, which would dial back conservation savings, and potentially lead to supply gaps. Time of Use has been a success, reducing our peak demand by up to five per cent, which means we don't need to build costly new generation. However, it may not be the best model for everyone in the province. That's exactly why we are already piloting different models that can give electricity customers choice in how they're billed. But this needs to be implemented responsibly, not through a short-sighted system like the NDP have proposed.

Through Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan, our government is cutting electricity bills by 25 per cent on average for all families starting this summer, along with about half a million farms and small businesses. It is the single

largest rate reduction in the province's history, and a way to ensure greater fairness in our electricity system. The PCs have no plan and the NDP hydro proposal offers nothing practical or substantial when it comes to real relief for Ontario families and small businesses.

From: Campbell, David (ENERGY)
Sent: March-08-17 1:21 PM
To: Nikolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY); Berry, James (ENERGY); Teliszewsky, Andrew (ENERGY)
Subject: RE: Morning Media Scan: Hydro Rate Reduction Plan - March 8, 2017

Added a few suggestions of my own. As always, feel free to use or ignore as you like

From: Nikolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)
Sent: March-08-17 12:30 PM
To: Berry, James (ENERGY); Campbell, David (ENERGY); Teliszewsky, Andrew (ENERGY)
Subject: RE: Morning Media Scan: Hydro Rate Reduction Plan - March 8, 2017

Thanks, I added a few suggestions, tracked.

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From: Berry, James (ENERGY)
Sent: March-08-17 11:54 AM
To: Campbell, David (ENERGY); Nikolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY); Teliszewsky, Andrew (ENERGY)
Subject: RE: Morning Media Scan: Hydro Rate Reduction Plan - March 8, 2017

Here's my first cut at our response. David/Colin – let me know if you have any suggested edits.

From: Teliszewsky, Andrew (ENERGY)
Sent: March-08-17 9:09 AM
To: Campbell, David (ENERGY); Nikolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY); Berry, James (ENERGY)
Subject: Fw: Morning Media Scan: Hydro Rate Reduction Plan - March 8, 2017

Hi.

Should do a reply to Star Op-Ed that is about how they actually are giving money to banks to pay for shares.

Atel/

From: Stinson, Jeffrey (CAB) <Jeffrey.Stinson@ontario.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, March 8, 2017 9:01 AM
To: @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management; Bevan, Andrew (OPO); McEachern, Gillian (OPO); Donelson, Philip (OPO); Bossin, Bryan (OPO); Tomney, Genevieve (OPO); @CAB-Trans CO; Baker, Carys (ENERGY); Berry, James (ENERGY); Bodrug, Andrew (ENERGY); Campbell, David (ENERGY); Coker, Meaghan (ENERGY); Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY); DeWolfe, Julie (ENERGY); Esdaile, Trevor (ENERGY); Festeryga, Katherine (ENERGY); Foster, David (ENERGY); Iqbal, Muhammad (ENERGY); McGrath, Jessica (ENERGY); Moseley-Williams, Kate (ENERGY); Nikolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY); Olsheski, Mark (ENERGY); Ramasra, Raynier (ENERGY); Ruttan, Craig (ENERGY); Singh, Alysha (ENERGY); Teliszewsky, Andrew (ENERGY); Thompson, Rachel (ENERGY); Tresise, Landon (ENERGY); Tretiakov, Ilia (ENERGY); Walman, Evan (ENERGY)

Cc: Sumi, Craig (CAB); Di Giovanni, Robert (CAB); Law, Sally (CAB); Stinson, Jeffrey (CAB); Nutter, George (ENERGY); Halford, Gavin (ENERGY); Electronic Media
Subject: Morning Media Scan: Hydro Rate Reduction Plan - March 8, 2017

Morning Media Scan: March 8, 2017

MEDIA SCAN: HYDRO RATE REDUCTION PLAN

March 8, 2017

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Print Coverage

PUBLICATION: Toronto Star
PAGE: A13
DATE: 2017.03.08
SECTION: Opinion
EDITION: ONT
BYLINE: Andrea Horwath
KEYWORDS: ontario, tipping, point, hydro, bills, hurting

ILLUSTRATION: Ontario NDP leader Andrea Horwath writes that her plan to lower hydro bills "fixes the system for the long-term by returning Hydro One to public hands - because owning it is a win-win that will deliver lower bills, permanently." Andrew Francis Wallace/Toronto Star file photo

WORD COUNT: 724

Toronto SN&P: hydro plan gives money to citizens, not banks (.

Ontario is at a tipping point. High hydro bills are hurting families, driving people and employers out of the province and keeping new investment away.

Last week, I released my plan to lower hydro bills by 30 per cent. It includes ending time-of-use pricing, scrapping unfair delivery charges and several other measures that will deliver immediate savings for everyone on their hydro bills.

It also fixes the system for the long-term by returning Hydro One to public hands - because owning it is a win-win that will deliver lower bills, permanently, and put \$7 billion back into the province - money that can go into schools and hospitals.

So, when Premier Wynne rolled out her plan, it's fair to say I joined Ontario families in being frustrated. It's a borrowing scheme that gives an additional \$40 billion in interest payments to bankers. That's \$40 billion that everyday Ontarians will pay for, one way or another.

The difference is clear: Over the next 30 years, the Liberal plan will see as much as \$40 billion in additional interest payments flow to banks, while our plan sees the province earn over \$7 billion in the same time frame as a result of public ownership. That's \$7 billion we can use to reduce rates, invest in schools and hospitals, and build transit.

We've all heard the heartbreaking stories of families, businesses, farmers and community organizations that are close to the breaking point. Despite their enormous efforts and improvements in efficiency and conservation, their bills continue to skyrocket.

I think of the single mom in Kitchener, Ont., who had to choose between paying the hydro bill or buying Christmas presents. I think of Charlene in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. She works two jobs, her husband works full time and they're drowning from the cost of hydro. I think of the curling club in Welland, Ont., that may have to close its doors because of the hydro bills. It should never have come to this.

We all know that we have to fix the cost of hydro in the province. But the contrast between the plans couldn't be more clear.

My plan helps people. Premier Wynne's plan helps bankers. And Patrick Brown and the Conservatives have no plan at all.

Any relief that borrowed cash provides will be short-term - and, of course, for a premier seeking re-election, that might be enough. Ontarians I've spoken to across the province this week say they're worried that loan will show up on their bills right after the election.

And the Liberal plan does nothing to address the underlying issues in Ontario's hydro system.

Premier Wynne still plans to continue the sell-off of Hydro One, which will drive our bills up even further. And the Liberals refuse to stop unfair rural delivery charges or time of use premiums. Their scheme does nothing to address the private power contracts that continue to drive up our hydro bills and it fails to end oversupply payments, where we actually pay private and foreign corporations for power we don't use.

I want to be very clear: Ontario's New Democrats will give careful consideration to any measure that will help ease the hydro burden Ontarians are facing. But this Band-Aid financing scheme does nothing to address the root cause of the problem. Bad contracts with private and foreign corporations and a sale on public assets are still at the core of the Liberal plan.

In my plan, there are real, concrete measures we can take today that will start reducing bills

immediately, including fixing unfair delivery costs, ending mandatory time-of-use rules, capping private profit margins, bringing real oversight to electricity prices and using tax benefits to help hydro users, not bankers.

The NDP plan will actually fix the system, today, and for generations to come. It will lower rates immediately and repair the mess the Conservatives and Liberals have made with their privatization and bad contracts - contracts that benefit private and foreign corporations, and not everyday bill-payers. We will end unfair delivery charges and time-of-use pricing, so people aren't paying a ridiculous premium for doing things like living in a small town or making dinner for their kids.

Our plan is online for all to read (ontariondp.ca/hydroplan). I encourage Ontarians to take a look for themselves.

Andrea Horwath is the leader of Ontario's New Democrats.

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