

Professions North
Sault Ste. Marie | Friday, March 10, 2017

- Thank you Scott [Fisher, Project Manager] for that kind introduction and thank you for the invitation to speak this afternoon.
- This morning, I had the opportunity to attend a breakfast hosted by the Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce, with business and community leaders to discuss our government's Fair Hydro Plan.
- I shared the measures our government is rolling out to cut electricity bills by 25 per on average for residential customers, small businesses and farms.
- As much as I want to talk to you about these significant reforms, I'm here today to discuss the extraordinary innovations and collaboration happening right here in the Soo.

- And how these advancements are helping to further strengthen Ontario's clean energy sector.
- This is a sector our government is absolutely committed to and, with your help, we've built a strong track record with many successes along the way.
- These achievements include Ontario benefiting from 90 per cent emissions-free electricity and initiatives that have generated over 42,000 jobs – good jobs supporting economic activity right here in Sault Ste. Marie and across Northern Ontario.
- With more than 18,000 megawatts of wind, solar, hydro power and bioenergy, our province will remain a global leader in clean energy investment.

- And renewables were a key element of our government's plan to shutter all of the province's coal plants, making us the first jurisdiction in all of North America to eliminate this dirty part of our supply mix.
- With your leadership and your ability to innovate our generation and future generations will benefit both economically and environmentally from your efforts.
- When thinking about the clean energy sector, a push and pull analogy often comes to mind.
- The push of customers demanding state-of-the-art technologies to help decarbonize and conserve energy.
- And the pull of innovators like those filling the room today that are supporting the evolution – the cleaning and greening – of our province's energy system.

- Right here in the Soo, Heliene has been keeping our province on the leading edge of the province's solar energy equipment manufacturing.
- Heliene has been assembling high-quality solar photovoltaic (PV) modules since 2010, for projects here in Ontario and across our southern border.
- Their plant includes a high level of automation, with the assembly line combining robotics and on-line continuous monitoring to produce cutting-edge modules for the North American marketplace.
- I know the sector is also excited about the prospects for the local Convergent Energy seven-megawatt lithium-ion battery project.

- This three-year pilot project – the result of an agreement with IESO – will monitor how battery storage of electricity can effectively improve the reliability on the grid.
- Another local project being undertaken is Infrastructure Energy’s proposal to modernize Soo’s grid with new and improved distribution assets, while not increasing costs for ratepayers.
- Their goal is to pursue private financing and design a solution that costs less than traditional infrastructure, while providing additional system benefits, through grid technologies such as voltage control, automated fault recovery, and an improved Operational Management System.
- Until recently, the basic infrastructure delivering electricity to customers remained unchanged for decades.

- But now computers are turning electrical transmission and distribution into a digital, high-tech endeavour.
- New technology is becoming available that can benefit consumers and utilities through better reliability, improved performance of their assets and resiliency.
- And the design of this advanced technology and cutting-edge projects are happening right here in the Soo
- They will have significant impacts on the energy sector's contribution to developing innovative, consumer-focused technologies, fostering economic development and promoting job creation.

- Sault Ste. Marie's innovation and ingenuity is on full display in this room and I'm thankful for the opportunity to be a part of the conversations, advancements and solutions that will continue to see Ontario as a global leader in the clean energy sector.
- Thank you again for the invitation to join you here today.
- Enjoy the remainder of the conference.