

Minister Glenn Thibeault: Leaders in the Legislature

Date: Wednesday, November 22, 2017

Location: Delta Chelsea Hotel, 3:00 pm

- Thanks for that kind introduction, X [TBD].
- It's a pleasure to be here with you today to continue our discussions on First Nations interests in the energy sector.
- I want to thank each of you for the work you've done bringing forward your communities' interests.
- I want to acknowledge the Elders and the youth that are in the room with us today.
- Ontario's relationship with First Nations is strengthened through meaningful dialogue, and Leaders in the Legislature is an opportunity to continue building on our commitment to cooperation and engagement to advance reconciliation and breathe life into the Political Accord
- I also want to thank the other panelists here with us this afternoon, including Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day
- Now for the purpose of today's discussion, I'd like to begin with providing a brief overview of Ontario's electricity system.
- A timely and topical task given last month's release of my ministry's 2017 Long-Term Energy Plan – or the LTEP for short.
- As indicated in the 2017 LTEP, Ontario's electricity system is well-positioned to serve the people of Ontario over the next 20 years.
- That's because, all told, we've invested more than \$70 billion in electricity generation and grid-related infrastructure, province-wide, since 2003.
- The benefits of these multi-billion dollar investments speak for themselves.
- But let me elaborate...
- First, Ontario's electricity system is not only robust and reliable – a welcome change from where it was prior to 2003.

- Ontario's electricity system is also clean and green.
- That's because Ontario made history more than three years ago...
- By becoming the first jurisdiction in North America to completely eliminate coal-fired electricity back in 2014.
- Cutting out coal not only removed the equivalent of some 750,000 cars from Ontario's roads for one year...
- It dramatically improved Ontario's air quality.
- Take smog advisories, for example.
- As recently as 2005, 53 smog days were reported.
- Fast forward to last year – not a single smog day on record.
- Cutting out coal was important for another reason...
- It placed Ontario at the vanguard in combatting global climate change.
- Let me explain.
- As stated in the 2017 LTEP, as of last year, Ontario's electricity system was 90 per cent free of the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that cause climate change.
- But the good news doesn't end there.
- Based on 2017 forecasts, Ontario's electricity sector is projected to account for only 2 per cent of our province's total GHG emissions in 2017.ⁱ
- In other words, Ontario's electrical grid is almost completely de-carbonized.
- This is important for two reasons:
- First, it positions us one step closer to meeting the objectives outlined in Ontario's Climate Change Action Plan.
- Second, it will help us transition towards a low-carbon and increasingly electrified economy.

- In preparing for this future, Indigenous participation in Ontario's energy sector continues to be a focus for this government.
- A critical piece in the 2017 LTEP, *Delivering Fairness and Choice*, is supporting First Nation capacity and leadership to assist in building community resiliency and participation in an evolving energy sector.
- The 2017 LTEP *Delivering Fairness and Choice* recognizes that many First Nation communities across Ontario continue to face energy related challenges: the need for reliable and affordable power, energy-inefficient housing and inadequate infrastructure, to name just a few.
- The causes and solutions to these challenges are rooted in complex historical, jurisdictional, geographic and regulatory contexts but the Province is committed to working with First Nations to identify issues and propose actions to advance solutions.
- I think you can agree that Ontario has already begun to take major steps to make electricity more affordable for all of your communities with the implementation of the First Nation Delivery Credit July 1st
- Thanks to Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan, First Nation on-reserve residential customers are now benefitting from a 100 per cent delivery credit on their monthly electricity bills.
- I am excited to report that over 20,000 First Nation on-reserve residential customers are no longer paying delivery charges
- Our plan – similar to cutting out coal – sets a historical precedent.
- As the single largest rate reduction in Ontario's history to date.
- Another precedent setting initiative we have undertaken is broadening the ownership of Hydro One
- I want to acknowledge the significant efforts that we are undertaking to move beyond the Agreement-in-Principle for the sale of Hydro One to realize a transformative wealth creation opportunity for the collective benefit of First Nations
- I understand all of you are diligently assessing the opportunity that has been brought before you...

- I am encouraged that the minimum threshold of 80% to close the transaction by the end of this year can be achieved, and it is my sincerest wish that we reach 100% so that no community gets left behind
- Thank you.