

Letter to the editor RE: NDP HYDRO PLAN GIVES MONEY TO CITIZENS, NOT BANKS

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Words: 389 words

Glenn Thibeault, Minister of Energy

The NDP hydro scheme is short on details and long on hollow half-measures and damaging promises. Many of their proposals rely on a vague and yet-to-be-determined “expert panel” that will be convened in the future, and 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 and ill-advised idea – buying back more than \$4-billion in shares of Hydro One – will not take 1 cent off electricity bills. The only impacts of this misguided measure would be to line the pockets of banks 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. The NDP proposal merely tells low-income Ontarians to “wait and see” for their future plans. Our plan will provide real and meaningful relief this summer.

Ontario’s Fair Hydro Plan would 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 – not only dialing back conservation savings, but it will lead to larger electricity supply gaps, which could lead to system reliability issues, such as brownouts, and increased costs for Ontarians.

Through Ontario’s Fair Hydro Plan, our government is cutting electricity bills by 25 per cent on average for all families and small businesses starting this summer, as part of a significant system restructuring that will address long-standing policy challenges and ensure greater fairness. 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.