

Hansard: Clark to Premier (Thibeault) -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> **MPP Clark:** Speaker, for 47 years, Swann's variety was a landmark in the village of Athens. Swann's survived a major fire and lasted through the terms of eight Premiers, but not the ninth. On Friday, a heartbroken owner Karen Swann turned out the lights for the last time. It wasn't a lack of customers that spelled the end for Swann's. It was the crippling cost of hydro, culminating in last month's outrageous \$7,000 bill. The Premier diminishes the hydro crisis and energy poverty she created by calling it a mistake. Speaker, what does the Premier have to say to Karen Swann who just paid for this mistake with her family business?

>> **Premier Wynne:** Well, Mr. Speaker, again I don't know the circumstances around this business. What I do know is that there are small businesses all over the province. Mr. Speaker, who are going to see a 25% reduction this summer. Mr. Speaker, because we know that it's not just individuals or families in their homes who have been carrying a burden, Mr. Speaker. As we have said have been asked to pay for upgrades to a system that had been neglected -- Have been asked to pay for improvement in the system, Mr. Speaker, that will last for many, many years, which is why we're spreading the cost of those over a longer period of time, Mr. Speaker. Again I don't know the specific circumstances around this business, but we understand. Very clearly that businesses, small businesses, mom and pop businesses. In towns around the province --

>> **MPP Clark:** Back to the Premier. For years the Premier ignored our warning that unaffordable hydro

rates were destroying our communities. Now, when her political future is at stake, she suddenly claims to care. They shamelessly spend taxpayer dollars on ads designed to portray themselves as heroes in a disaster they created. But if she stops patting herself on the back and looks around, she'll see that no one's buying it. Ontarians will never forget this **Premier** did nothing as hydro rates soared, business closed and families were forced from their homes. Speaker, will the **Premier** admit that it was her failed leadership on the hydro crisis that cost Karen Swann everything she had?

>> **Premier Wynne:** Minister of energy.

>> **Minister Thibeault:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I not Honourable member used the word disaster, and that was the electricity grid that they left for us, Mr. Speaker. They left the province and the electricity grid in a disaster, Mr. Speaker. We had rolling Brownouts on a regular basis. A blackout, Mr. Speaker. So we acted. This government, this party acted to make sure that we rebuilt the system, Mr. Speaker, rebuilt generation, rebuilt transmission, rebuilt distribution, Mr. Speaker. That was needed to ensure that all businesses in this province, that all families in this province were able to keep the lights on, Mr. Speaker. And now, now, Mr. Speaker, we're make shooing -- making sure that we're reducing those bills by 25%, Mr. Speaker, for small businesses, for farms. and for families right across the province. And let's not forget 40 to 50% reduction for those folks and Hydro One customers.

N.B.: Transcripts are captured by a closed captioning system and may contain errors.