

Hansard: Fife to Thibeault -- Hydro Rates

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> **MPP Fife:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the **Premier**. Last week during the Kitchener Waterloo Santa Claus parade, I learned that the Waterloo knights of Columbus had gotten a 40% increase in their hydro bills over the course of the year. They are using the same amount of power but they are paying hundreds of dollars more than they paid last year, almost double. When charities, when charities have to keep paying more for privatized power, this means they have less money for helping people. And the not-for-profit sector in this province is hurting because of high hydro rates. What will the **Premier** do to make sure that charity cost use their money to help people instead of being forced to pay profits to private investors on their skyrocketing hydro bills?

>> **Min. Thibeault:** Mr. Speaker, there are many things that we are doing, Mr. Speaker, to help not only charities and businesses right across the province, Mr. Speaker, but families and it's something on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, we're very proud of. We've ensured that every family, every small business and actually charities, Mr. Speaker, will get that 8% reduction on their bill come January 1st, Mr. Speaker. That's a significant reduction that charities can actually use and put towards their products, Mr. Speaker. I know for five years, Mr. Speaker, I actually ran the United Way in Sudbury and we ensured that we put every dollar into those programs. Great organizations like the knights of Columbus, Mr. Speaker, like many other charities like the municipalities, Mr. Speaker, they are actually utilizing programs like the save on energy program, Mr. Speaker. Saving money, saving energy and actually, Mr. Speaker, reducing our G.H.T. That is something we should be proud of on all sides of this House, Mr. Speaker. Keeping money in our pocket and helping our environment.

>> **MPP Fife:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the **Premier**. So at the beginning of this year, the **Premier** insulted Ontarians, who demanded that lower hydro rates claiming that they were

really demanding a return to coal, denying that hydro rates was a crisis in the province of Ontario. Then she insulted their intelligence again by claiming that Ontario's hydro rates were perfectly reasonable, even as 60,000 families in this province were being cut off because they could no longer afford their hydro bills. Now, after the insults and the miss directions have failed, she has decided to apologize for hydro rates but she refuses to change the behaviour of this government. Instead of empty apologies, will the **Premier** rein in hydro rates by stopping the further sell-off of Hydro One and put the people of this province first above their interests?

>> Min. Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was this **Premier** and the previous Minister of energy that worked with the O.E.B. And gave the O.E.B. The power to ensure that there was no disconnections. Ten days' notice, Mr. Speaker, on any disconnection and ensuring that there was resources provided to these families to make sure that they didn't actually have to have their power cut off, Mr. Speaker. But what I do find very interesting is we've got a great bill now being brought forward by the ministry of economic development and growth. Bill 27, Mr. Speaker. The ban and reduction bill. Mr. Speaker, it has a clause now that allows the O.E.B. To ban disconnections during the winter, Mr. Speaker. So that begs the question will the opposition plan to move unanimous consent to support bill 27 so we can actually support our families during the winter months, Mr. Speaker ? It's all talk on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker. There's never any action and there's no plan. Thank you very much.

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