

Hansard: Horwath to Thibeault -- Hydro Costs

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> **Andrea Horwath:** Thank you, Speaker. My question's for the **Premier**. The spokesperson of the Sault Ste. Marie electricity utility, the public utility, doesn't want to see families' electricity cut off. He says the solution is to bring down the actual cost of electricity. **Is the Premier going to do what's right for families in the sioux as well as families across Ontario and start to actually address the cost of electricity so people can start to afford their electricity bills?**

>> **Min. Thibeault:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pleased to rise on this question. Of course, Mr. Speaker, we've already brought forward the 8% reduction actually helping every family in Sault Ste. Marie. Mr. Speaker. For those that are in and outside of Sault Ste. Marie on Hydro One, Mr. Speaker, as an r2 customer within those regions they're seeing a \$60 reduction on their bill, Mr. Speaker. But you know what else the folks from Sault Ste. Marie are seeing, Mr. Speaker? Actually a clean grid, one that they can rely on. One that was in a mess back in 2003, Mr. Speaker. We've made sure we've invested billions and billions of dollars to make sure that families like in Sault Ste. Marie, in Sudbury and northern Ontario, have access to an electricity grid that is reliable and clean, Mr. Speaker, and that's something that we have done as this government invested in electricity system to make sure that it's clean, reliable. Mr. Speaker, we're going to take it to the next level now and make it as affordable as we can for all families and businesses right across the province.

>> **Andrea Horwath:** Jordan Zimm, the spokesperson at the Sault p.u.c. was very clear I quote -- if you want to solve this problem, solution is in controlling the commodity price of electricity, end quote. The **Premier** knows as well as I do, Speaker, that private contracts lock Ontarians into paying private profits for years. But we can actually direct public companies to charge less. It's why power is a powerful tool, Speaker, that benefits families, businesses and the province as a whole. When a spokesperson of Sault Ste. Marie p.u.c. is telling the government it needs to reduce the cost of electricity, the question is, is the **Premier** actually listening?

>> **Min. Thibeault:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This **Premier** has been listening, Mr. Speaker, for years. We've actually invested, Mr. Speaker, and renegotiated the Samsung agreement saving \$3.7 billion. Reduced fit prices by \$1.9 billion. Created competitive L.R.P. Process. Suspending the L.R.P. 2 project, Mr. Speaker, 3.8 billion dollars. Mr. Speaker, we've been investing in making sure we find ways to have downward pressure on rates while building the system up for a decade, Mr. Speaker. One thing we should also talk about when it comes to Sault Ste. Marie this government has been listening, Mr. Speaker. For example ongoing provincial support for the city of Sault Ste. Marie will be more than \$30 million in 2017. Mr. Speaker. That's where -- in the neighbourhood of \$1.200 of provincial support per residential taxpayer. Timmins for example, Mr. Speaker, \$1 million. So this government gets it, Mr. Speaker. We're listening and we're acting.

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