

Media Call Summary - September 2, 2016

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Date: Fri, 02 Sep 2016 16:33:39 -0400

Media Call Summary

Minister's Office : 2 inquiries

Topic : Hydro costs in Niagara region

Reporter & Outlet: Andrea Tingey, St. Catharines Standard

Response Type: Minister's spokesperson

Reporter's Comments and Questions:

Reporter is working on a story about hydro costs for municipalities within the Niagara region. She was hoping to speak to a minister or someone from the Province who is knowledgeable about hydro costs.

She looking for more information on the Global Adjustment charge.

Response :

Unfortunately the Minister is unavailable, please attribute the following statement to "a spokesperson from the Ministry of Energy":

"Recently, Ontario's independent Financial Accountability Officer released a report on energy prices in Ontario. The report found that the average family in Ontario spends less money on electricity than in every other province in Canada, except British Columbia. It also confirmed that total home heating and cooling costs are in the middle of the pack when compared to other

provinces. While the report notes that energy prices are increasing in every part of Canada, families in Ontario have seen energy costs increase at a pace consistent with other provinces and at a slower rate than Quebec and most of Atlantic Canada.

Ontario has done the heavy lifting in rebuilding an unreliable electricity grid and transitioned off dirty coal-fired generation. Coal was the cheapest way to create power and the source of smog days and harmful pollution. Getting off coal and upgrading our system means that even though Ontario is already in the middle of the pack of Canadian jurisdictions, we won't see the kind of price increases coal-dependent provinces will down the road as they close those power plants and need to invest in failing transmission.

Our government knows that more needs to be done to reduce rates in Ontario, and we recognize that the average does not tell the story of many families in the province. The cost of rebuilding our electricity system and transitioning off dirty coal has been particularly difficult for families most in need. That's why we put in place a plan and launched the Ontario Electricity Support Program and removed the Debt Retirement Charge for all residential users on January 1, 2016. Together, this is saving the average low-income family \$430 annually. And we understand that bills can be even harder for families and seniors in rural and remote areas that heat using electricity. That's why we increased the monthly Ontario Electricity Support Program benefit these families can access to up to \$75 - or almost \$1000 annually including the removal of the Debt Retirement Charge.

We know that there is more work to be done, and that we must continue to do all we can to bring costs down. We continue to listen to families and businesses in every part of our great province on how we can build on our plan for a system that delivers clean and reliable power for all Ontarians and to extend affordability across Ontario."

For information on the Global Adjustment please see the following link:
http://www.ieso.ca/Documents/Understanding_GA_Jan_2016.pdf

Topic: Hydro prices and auto manufacturing

Reporter & Outlet: Ethan Lou, Reuters

Response Type: Minister's spokesperson

Comments and Reporter's Questions:

Reporter is doing a story on the auto talks between Unifor and the U.S. Big Three car makers.

Reporter is looking into the impact of hydro prices on the car makers' bottom lines.

Does the Ministry have numbers on the rates charged to and the typical monthly hydro cost for Chrysler, GM and Ford?

Reporter also wondering how that compares to an average household.

Response :

TBD

Agencies: 1 inquiry (*from September 1, 2016*)

Agency : OEB

Topic : Rate review process

Reporter and Outlet: Northumberland radio 89.7

Response Type: Agency spokesperson

Background:

The OEB was asked to explain the rate review process to Cobourg/Port Hope listeners on today's "Week in Review" show on Northumberland radio 89.7

Response :

OEB spokesperson talked about the process, how customers are notified and what the OEB looks for in rate applications, stressing the OEB's commitment to control costs and limit bill impacts while ensuring reliable service.

The brief 5-minute interview concluded with the host of the show saying the local community is reassured that an organization as fine and professional as the OEB is involved in this process.

Ministry : 0 inquiries