

TRANSCRIPT – Andrea Horwath on CTV Morning Live via Skype – March 1, 2017

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Host: Reports the Liberal cabinet will finalize a plan today to cut rates by 25 percent. Sources say the massive reduction will come mostly by smoothing out the cost of electricity contracts over longer periods. With more, we're joined by Ontario NDP leader Andrea Horwath who is in Chatham, Ontario. Good morning.

Horwath:

- Good morning

Host: Tell us, what's your reaction to the Liberals' plan, because I know that you announced something earlier on behalf of the NDP saying that you could slash it by 30. Theirs—potentially coming out with something that saves 25 percent.

Horwath:

- Well, we haven't actually seen their plan
- But what we've heard so far in the reports is, is really quite disappointing
- Look, I think people need relief, absolutely
- So, you know, if people are going to get some relief on those hydro bills, that's extremely important
- But what the Liberals are putting forward is basically, you know, stretching out the payments to help, you know, to help nobody really but their banker friends over time who make more money on the interest
- But they're not changing anything in the system
- So they're not getting rid of the unfair delivery charges that small town and rural Ontario folks are facing
- They're not getting rid of the time-of-use pricing, which has been a failure all the way around
- It, it hasn't created the conservation that, that people want to see and, and it hasn't, it hasn't helped people reduce their bills so they, they haven't dealt with the oversupply issue that we, we see where so many private and foreign companies are making money hand over fist on, on energy that we're producing and not using, that we're dumping, you know, to other jurisdictions at a very low rate
- It, I mean, it doesn't change any of the system
- And so, what is the Liberal—what are the Liberals—saying, "just trust us"?
- We know what happens, right?—we, we, we trust them and, and they get re-elected and then we're just in the same mess again after the next election
- I, I think people have learned their lesson in that regard

- And I'm disappointed with the lack of, you know, the lack of system change [sic] that the government is prepared to do with the, with the hydro system

Host: You sound really passionate about this issue and I imagine some of it comes from talking to Ontarians. What are they expressing to you about their hydro bills?

Horwath:

- Oh, I mean, you wouldn't believe the stories that I've heard
- And, in fact, I mean, I guess you would because I'm sure you're hearing them too
- People are having to make decisions, choices, that nobody in Ontario should have to make—whether to put food on the table or pay the hydro bill; whether to, you know, buy prescriptions for your family, fill those prescriptions or pay the hydro bill
- I have, I've talked to moms in several parts of Ontario where they're saying they're not putting RESP money away any more for their kids, they're not contributing to their kids' education funds, because they have to take that money now and, and use it to pay their hydro bills
- So there's no doubt that there are a lot of people suffering and that are making decisions that in a prosperous place like Ontario people should not have to make
- So there's no doubt—serious problems with our electricity system
- However, this plan—I mean, and we haven't really seen the details, so we'll wait and see—but this plan, from what we hear, won't deal with any of those underlying drivers in our system that are raising the cost
- It won't, it won't bring Hydro One back into public hands
- And, look, the next big hit that we're going to take is as we continue to privatize Hydro One, it's going to increase the rates even more
- That's why we have to stop that sell-off
- 80 percent of Ontarians didn't want Hydro One to be sold off, and the Liberal government—the Premier, Premier Wynne—stubbornly went ahead with that plan
- So, there are lots of changes that need to happen, not simply stretching out the mortgage payments

Host: OK, provincial NDP leader, Andrea Horwath. Thank you so much for joining us.

Horwath:

- My pleasure, thank you

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