# Evening Media Scan: Hydro Rate Reduction Plan - June 2, 2017

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Evening Media Scan: June 2, 2017

## MEDIA SCAN: HYDRO RATE REDUCTION PLAN

June 2, 2017

Click links below to view article:

**Online Coverage**

- **Bayshore Broadcasting:** MPP Walker Votes Against Bill 132
- **Manitoulin Expositor:** Spring Bay woman says Ontario residents have no faith in Fair Hydro Plan bill

**TV Transcripts**

- **MCTV:** PC MPP Vid Fedeli says Hydro Relief Plan Will Add up to $93 Billion in More Debt
- **CKWS:** Royal Kingston Curling Club Concerned About Rising Hydro Rates and Increase to Minimum Wage


## Online Coverage

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### *Bayshore Broadcasting: MPP Walker Votes Against Bill 132*

By: Al Parrish
Friday, June 2, 2017

http://www.bayshorebroadcasting.ca/news_item.php?NewsID=93547

MPP Bill Walker of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound and the PC caucus voted against Bill 132, the Fair Hydro Act.

This bill reduces electricity bills for all residential consumers and as many as half a million small businesses and farms, starting this summer.

The Wynne government characterizes this as the largest electricity rate cut in the history of Ontario.
According to the Liberals, it would:
Provide immediate relief in the short-term by reducing electricity bills by 25% on average and up to 40-50% for low-income Ontarians and those living in eligible rural and northern communities.

- Provide medium-term relief by holding electricity rates at inflation for the next four years.
- Broaden the Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP) to expand benefits funded by government.
- Enhance the Rural or Remote Rate Protection (RRRP) to provide distribution charge relief to roughly 800,000 customers
- Remove the delivery charge for all on-reserve First Nations residential customers.

Bill Walker says of course he is not against lower rates but he says the price is too high. The government is borrowing 25 billion dollars to pay for rate reductions and this will have to be paid back.
According to Walker this will cost at least 45 billion over time and, in a worst case scenario, with rising interest rates, 90 billion.
Although he says he is in favour of clean, green energy, he feels the cost of wind and solar is too high and the power is unreliable. He says the government could have done many things differently including lowering the Hydro CEO's salary and cancelling unprofitable contracts.

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### *Manitoulin Expositor: Spring Bay woman says Ontario residents have Plan bill*

By: Tom Sasvari
June 2, 2017

http://www.manitoulin.ca/2017/06/02/spring-bay-woman-says-ontario-residents-no-faith-fair-hydro-plan-bill/

SPRING BAY—A Spring Bay woman has told the provincial Standing Committee on Justice and Policy that Ontario residents do not have any faith in Bill 132-the Fair Hydro Plan and that the bill should be taken off the table.

"From our vantage point, I can share that the people have no faith in this plan," stated Tanya Giles. "Moreover it is appalling that once again the Liberals with their majority government are going to abuse that power, and push this bill through. That in and of itself is not lost on the voting public.”

“We are asking with all due respect that this bill be taken off the table and that all parties be given the opportunity to review and build on this document. The issues are far too important,” Ms. Giles told the committee.

“One of the things I said when I was here is if MPPs, especially Liberal MPPs were voting for their party’s stance on this issue and not voting for the people that elected them; they are there for the wrong reasons,” Ms. Giles told the Recorder.

“Thank you for the opportunity to make my presentation on Bill 132, the Fair Hydro Plan,” Ms. Giles told members of the committee in her presentation last week. “My name is Tanya Giles. I am a wife, mother, a ratepayer and a senior administrator of the Facebook page ‘Take Back Your Power Ontario.’ We have a very active page that is currently building  a Coalition of Hydro Facebook pages across the province that collectively have a reach of over 1.5 million people a week. That said, I know what I share with you today, is reflective of millions of Ontarians across the province.”

Ontario is a province in crisis, said Ms. Giles. “The last 14 years of Liberal government has brought us the Clean Energy Act costing us billions in green energy contracts, smart metres that do not work, a faulty accounting system, and multi-million dollar salaries for Hydro One executives, while families are pinching pennies to pay their hydro bills.”

“However, the most disturbing of all was the sale of Hydro One, a Crown Corporation strategically designed to take profits and re-invest into our schools, hospitals and roads. The Ontario Liberals behind the backs of the PCs and the NDP put a plan in place and rushed that mandate through. And even though 83 percent of Ontarians are against the sale of our crown corporation, the sale of shares continued,” said Ms. Giles.

“What deeply concerns me, and millions of Ontarians is the way Bill 132 is being rushed through the legislature,” continued Ms. Giles. “History has clearly demonstrated that Liberal energy file mandates that become legislation have not ended well for Ontarians.”

“The role of the official opposition and the third party is to evaluate the legislation put forward to act on behalf of the people, to review and make suggestions. When they have no material to advise on, and when leaked documents provide pause as to long term costs with the Liberals admitting they have yet to evaluate those numbers, the question becomes, why the rush?”

Ms. Giles told the committee, “the Liberals have put forward a plan that Ontarians don’t know much about. We believe your carrots of the promise of discounts on our bills over the short term come at a very high price, the future of our province. The leaked documents served to prove to us that the Liberals either know that hydro costs will skyrocket, and this temporary reprieve is an election tactic, or they are grossly incompetent in their planning. We have heard the excuses as to the document in question not being reliable, but when asked for specific information, the opposition and third party are attacked and the Liberals take an offensive position, instead of engaging in collaborative dialogue.”

“How can we, as Ontarians, put our faith in a bill when the information put forward is wrapped up in rhetoric and political propaganda? We feel the Liberals are underestimating the intelligence of Ontarians. We are not interested in vanity ads. We need to see the plan’s analysis and tangible evidence. We need to see a plan that breaks down the costs, both in the long and short-term.’’

“By and large the people of this province believe that it is not the responsibility of the NPD or the PC’s to come up with a plan to fix our energy crisis. That job lays squarely at the feet of the party who put us in this mess. The time for finger pointing and historical rhetoric is over,” said Ms. Giles.

“The leaked documents holds some validity in that it has proven that the Liberals do not know the long-term ramifications and the numbers are not valid,” she said.

“I travelled six hours today to speak to you for five minutes,” said ms. Giles. “I fear for my community of Manitoulin Island where we have a system that needs upgrades and suffers from frequent outages, where delivery fees that are unmanageable and we see no benefit from those costs. Where families are up for disconnection and businesses are closing their doors…the Clean Energy Act has failed us.”

“I implore a realistic approach be taken in tackling the root problems we are facing with the energy sector in Ontario. The fair hydro plan is not a solution and everyone knows this.”

"In closing, I hope I have made clear that myself and the millions of people our Facebook Page Coalition reaches are not in favour of the Fair Hydro Plan—we do not see it as a solution to the problem.

It is a bill we cannot afford."

## TV Transcripts

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***MCTV:*** *PC MPP Vid Fedeli says Hydro Relief Plan Will Add up to*
Source: MCTV
Jun 2, 2017 6:17 PM (9)

Anchor: Progressive Conservative Finance Critic Vic Fedeli has released his fourth book on his Focus on Finance series. Fedeli says the overall message of his book is that the Wynne government has been misleading the taxpayers on the real financial situation in Ontario. He says this explains recent school closures and hospital cuts and hospital beds closing. He says the debt will hit $390 billion in five years.

Vic Fedeli, PC MPP: This hydro relief plan that the Premier is bringing will add up to $93 billion more of debt. She planned to hide that debt over at Ontario Power Generation. The Auditor said no you can't. I won't let you. You must put that on the province's books. That's why that will mean we will be almost a half a trillion dollars in debt in province on Ontario.

Anchor: A statement to CTV from the provincial Finance Minister Charles Sousa's office says the government's ability to meet financial challenges was reinforced by a balanced 2017 budget.

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***CKWS:*** *Royal Kingston Curling Club Concerned About Rising Hyd Minimum Wage*
Source:  CKWS
Jun 1, 2017 6:33 PM (15)

Anchor: Rising hydro rates and the upcoming increase to minimum wage are just two of the challenges facing curling clubs across the province. Some of those clubs are now facing another bill.

Reporter:  This group of aspiring chefs is talking about today's assignment. They are not working in your typical school setting – today, their classroom is the lounge space and kitchen at the Royal Kingston Curling Club. It is one way they generate revenue during the off-season.

John Ryce, President, Royal Kingston Curling Club: We do have a full-time general manager and some staff that we pay. But the majority of workers are all volunteers. And thank god for them.

Reporter:  That's because they've recently been dealt another financial blow. In addition to rising hydro costs and an upcoming increase to the minimum wage, curling clubs will be subjected to the same fees as sports bars to show Sports Net and TSN inside. It will result in an additional $200 dollars per month. The club cannot afford the increase. But they don't believe doing without it is an option either. Watching sports is part of the curling experience.

Steve Hulton, General Manger, Royal Kingston Curling Club: They certainly won't be hanging around the club. So the whole club atmosphere, the whole social atmosphere of being at a club is going to be lost.

Reporter:  With it revenue from food and alcohol sales. But Rogers broadcasting, the rights holder to national hockey league broadcasts in Canada, says they are working on a solution. In a statement to CKWS, the director of communications for Sport Net said, "We understand that not all establishments with a liquor license are the same, just like not all curling clubs are the same." Curling Canada has expressed a legitimate concern and we reach out to them to discuss opportunities for their members. We look forward to working with them and finding a solution." But for now, the TV sets inside the curling club lounge will stay black and unless some sort of agreement can be made with Rogers and Bell, they will show something other than sports when the curling season resumes in the fall.