

Hansard: Brown to Premier (Thibeault) -- Hydro-Rate Reduction Plan

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Tabled just minutes ago as another damning report by the auditor general. The unfair hydro plan will cost Ontario up to \$4 billion more than necessary. \$4 billion. That means Ontario families will have to pay an additional \$4 billion just for the Liberals' reelection campaign. Mr. Speaker, this scheme, unfair hydro plan is about one thing and only one thing and that's the Liberals' reelection. It's not about paying hydro bills. It's not about helping Ontario families. This is just about the partisan interests of the Liberal party of Ontario. The auditor general makes that abundantly clear. What I want to know, Mr. Speaker, from the Premier is how can she justify blowing \$4 billion to help the Liberal party?

>> Premier Wynne: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the work that the auditor general has done. Mr. Speaker, you know the reality is that families across this province, individuals across this province were saying that the cost of their electricity prices were going up too high, Mr. Speaker, and going up too quickly. Mr. Speaker, I have acknowledged many times in this legislature and outside this legislature that the investments that had to be made, because we had a degraded electricity system in this province, Mr. Speaker, that we needed to rebuild, that there was a cost associated with that. I've been quite open about that, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I hear heckling from the other side that this is partisan. This is not partisan. This is about people needing to have reliability of turning on the lights, Mr. Speaker, and the lights coming on. In 2003, we had blackouts and Brownouts. The lights weren't coming on, Mr. Speaker. We've rebuilt the system and people needed a break.

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, back to the Premier. The way this government chose to do their unfair hydro plan cost Ontario families \$4 billion. This is your decision. This is the path you picked. The auditor general makes that unequivocally clear. It also confirms another thing, that the Liberal party and the way they're doing this cooks the books. You know, you read the direct quote, Mr. Speaker. This is a direct quote. They're making up their own accounting rules.

[Interjections] Can you package that? A direct quote making up your own accounting rules? She also unearthed the fact that ratepayers will be charged more than the actual cost of electricity being produced in order to pay back borrowing. This is cynical politics at its worst. Making up your own rules, charging Ontario families more to serve the partisan interests of the Liberal party. Mr. Speaker, my question for the Premier --Why won't she just come clean and admit to Ontario families that she's --

>> The Speaker: Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Be seated, please. I am -- I'm not prepared to accept the terminology that was used so I'll ask the member to withdraw.

>> Patrick Brown: Withdraw the direct quote.

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government thanks the auditor general for her review of our plan to reduce electricity bills for all residential consumers by an average of 25%, Mr. Speaker. Families in this province have asked for real and immediate relief on their electricity bills. That's why we have delivered, Mr. Speaker, the largest rate reduction in Ontario's history. Since 2003, nearly \$70 billion have been invested in the electricity system, including more than 37 billion in electricity generation to ensure that our system is clean and reliable. Mr. Speaker, as we all are aware the auditor general's report is particular Cal in nature and I understand she will be discussing it with the media and members of the legislature at 12:00 PM Today. We've also been addressing some of these points that the standing committee on estimates, Mr. Speaker, so, in respecting the Independence of the --Officers of the legislature, including the auditor general, our government will respond to the report following the Premier's conference.

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