

ENE Messaging: Poll, and Hydro One transformers

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ISSUE: At the OEA AGM, the Innovative Research Group presented a poll which found that Ontarians do not feel they are protected with respect to prices.

ANALYSIS: The poll was striking, with 50% of respondents strongly disagreeing with the statement that they are protected. As new rate mitigation efforts take effect, and as we transition out of an especially hot summer which drove up rates, there may be opportunity for these emotions to settle a bit. In the meantime, our messaging – echoing the Premier – focuses on the fact that we've heard from people and that's why we've acted.

MESSAGING:

- Our government has heard from Ontarians and is committed to helping them with their everyday living costs.
- Through initiatives announced in the Throne Speech, our government will reduce the cost of electricity bills across the board.
 1. Families and small businesses will be instantly and permanently rebated Ontario's percentage of HST on their bills which is a savings of 8%, or \$130 annually - a significant savings.
 2. Rural and remote communities will be rebated 20%, or \$540 annually - a necessary relief for families to help offset the cost of supplying power (delivery charge) to these areas.
 3. Newly eligible manufacturers will receive approximately 34% in savings as a result of the expanded Industrial Conservation Initiative, which is a benefit in return for their continued commitment to meeting conservation targets.
- Our government also recently announced we will be suspending the procurement of large renewable energy projects. This initiative, taken as a result of expert advice indicating that Ontario has already achieved adequate supply, will save the province \$3.8 billion in costs, or about \$2.45 off the average customer's bill.
- We are committed to ensuring affordable access to our clean, reliable electricity supply.

ISSUE: Paul Bliss reported on CTV about the state of Hydro One transmission upgrades. The report claimed that Hydro One has received rate increases on several occasions from the OEB to fix specific transformers that have never been fixed.

ANALYSIS: Paul Bliss appears to have sourced this story from Peter Tabuns, who is energy critic. The story originally comes from the AG's report on the issue. We have some generic messaging from the time in response to the AG's critiques of the reliability of our system, which I have copied below. We're waiting on some updated messaging from Hydro One to be a bit more specific in our response, and should have that soon.

MESSAGING:

- We took a dirty and outdated system and made it clean and reliable
- We're already rebuilding 80% of the system
- Canadian Energy Association ranks Ontario second in reliability
- Projects completed since 2003 ensure that blackouts, brownouts and smog days are things of the past:

- o upgraded 11,000 km of transmission and distribution lines;
- o increased transmission capacity by 10,000 MW
- LTEP identified priority upgrades but there is more work to be done after years of PC neglect
- Our priority is ensuring that Ontarians have power when and where they need it

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