

FW: Minister Leal's statement on Hydro

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Date: Thu, 02 Mar 2017 13:37:38 -0500

Hi guys:

Minister Leal's office is hoping to put out below statement to Ag media. Any concerns with the below going out? I made an addition in red.

Thanks,
James

From: Crowley, Christina (OMAFRA)
Sent: March-02-17 1:05 PM
To: McInerney, Nicole (OMAFRA); Wilkes, Johanna (OMAFRA); Murphy-Rheaume, Phillipe (OMAFRA); Kim, Carol (OMAFRA)
Cc: Lagerquist, Jason (OMAFRA)
Subject: Feedback Required: First stab at Minister Leal's statement on Hydro
Importance: High

Hi Team,

Thought it would be a good idea to have a statement go out from Jeff today to ag media and rural Ontario media outlets on the hydro announcement made this morning by Premier Wynne. Ironically enough, I just received my first inquiry asking for Minister Leal's comment on the announcement (from Farms.com) so the timing couldn't be better.

If you could please let me know what you think of the following statement by 2:00 p.m., we'll try and get this done and have Phil take it over to Jeff at 2:30 to approve so I can get this out the door today (in advance of tomorrow!). Just a heads up that much of the language I used was pulled from NR/backgrounders/KM's etc so this should be already pre-approved messaging (i.e. long-standing policy challenge was referenced in the NR, etc).

"Our government has listened to Ontarians about the need to reduce their electricity bills and today, we're taking action. Electricity rates are a long-standing policy challenge I have heard about from rural residents, members of the agri-food community and small businesses in my travels across the province. The new measures announced by Premier Wynne, will provide every residential customer in Ontario with an average reduction of 25 per cent on their monthly bills. I am particularly pleased that these fairer hydro rates, with additional benefits, will help to lessen the burden felt by people living in rural communities, including our hardworking farmers, agri-food businesses and small businesses in

Ontario. This includes an expansion of the Rural or Remote Rate Protection (RRRP) program to provide distribution charge relief to an additional customers served by Local Distribution Companies with the highest rates.

By addressing this necessity for Ontarians, our plan builds on our government's commitment to provide affordable access to energy to all Ontarians, including expanding natural gas to more communities, and grid-connecting remote First Nations communities. This positive step is how our government is attracting and supporting jobs in Ontario, growing our economy and helping Ontarians in their everyday lives. For more information about the announcement, visit Ontario.ca/FairHydroPlan."

- ***Jeff Leal, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and
Minister Responsible for Small Business***

Please let me know what you think at your earliest convenience,

Christina

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