

Hansard: Tabuns to Thibeault -- Hydro-Rate Reduction Plan

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INSTANT HANSARD

>>MPP Tabuns: Thank you, Sneaker. Again to the Premier. Hone springs eternal. One government official said this about the Liberals' determination to make people pay an extra \$4 billion on their hydro bills. Quote -- hopefully they'll come to the conclusion that the plan can be financed by the province rather than externally, as that would be a lot simpler and cheaper. Why does the Premier ignore the advice of nonpartisan public servants and push ahead with this financial cover-up?-Withdraw.

>>Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Sneaker. Happy to rise and once again talk about the importance of the policy choice that we made. Mr. Sneaker. That policy choice was to ensure that we can have that clean, reliable and affordable system that we've talked about. And I know, Mr. Sneaker, that we keep talking about the importance of making sure that we keep electricity costs within the electricity system, and the fair hydro plan does that. Mr. Sneaker. We have always ensured that, when O.P.G. Builds a new hydroelectric dam, when Bruce power, you know, refurbishes its nuke plants. Mr. Sneaker. When we see Guelph hydro for example or any utility actually invest in their system, the cost borrowing stays within the electricity system. And that's why, Mr. Sneaker, we brought forward this policy choice was to keep the cost of the electricity system in that sector, Mr. Speaker.

>>MPP Tabuns: Thank you. Her predecessor decided he didn't have to answer to the legislature either, and that at any time and well Sneaker, the auditor's report says that senior government officials and staff cautioned against that expensive accounting trick. She said officials noticed the design of their \$40 billion borrowing scheme, quote, will result in higher costs for Ontarians, end quote. This was cut and dry. The Liberals were told, if they proceeded with the trick, it would cost people more, and they did it anyway. Why is the Premier putting her desperate reelection hopes ahead of the needs of Ontario families?

>>Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Sneaker. From my understanding, the Premier's previous predecessor, when he left, we ended up winning a majority government on this side of the House because we were the party that brought forward a plan that actually benefitted all of the people of Ontario. Mr. Sneaker. None of them on that side. Mr. Sneaker, had a plan --Thank you, Mr. Sneaker. The opposition parties had no plan then. They have no plan now. Mr. Sneaker. We brought forward a plan that brought immediate relief, a policy choice that we made. Mr. Speaker. A policy choice that we made. To continue to ensure we have a clean, reliable and affordable system of electricity in this

province, Mr. Speaker, and something that we'll continue to do for the people of Ontario.

>>MPP Tabuns: Thank you, Sneaker. And again to the Premier, the Premier's \$40 billion hydro borrowing scheme was there are going to drive up hydro bills in the long run. To hide the cost she or someone in her Cabinet authorized a \$4 billion accounting trick and added it onto people's hydro bills. The A.G. Says the Liberals were warned about this. They were given other options and they simply ignored the advice from civil servants and went ahead anyway. The Premier won't tell us who green-lit this massive betrayal of the public trust. She refuses to release emails that show who in her party knew when and when. How many more desperate abuses of power does this Premier plan before the next election?

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>>Minister Thiabeault: Thank you, Mr. Sneaker. And that's unequivocally untrue, Mr. Sneaker. We have always been open and transparent as a government. We'll continue to co-operate, Mr. Sneaker, with the office of the auditor general. And of course, Mr. Sneaker, let me reiterate something --Like I started off with, Mr. Sneaker, let's talk about what we have done so far. 13,212 emails that have been brought in to the auditor general. 1,200 emails and records from the IESO. Hundreds from the O.P.G. Mr. Sneaker, 3,242 from the Ontario financing authority. Thousands of records from the treasury board, Mr. Sneaker. In this process, Mr. Sneaker, we have ensured that every day and throughout our operations we're adhering to all document retention standards.

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