

Re: Statement from Brockville Recorder and Times

From: "Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)" <colin.nekolaichuk@ontario.ca>
To: "McPhail, Blane (OPO)" <blane.mcphail@ontario.ca>, "@OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management" <opo-mediarelationsandissuesmgmt@msgov.gov.on.ca>
Cc: "Gallant, Laura (MOHLTC)" <laura.gallant@ontario.ca>, "Berry, James (ENERGY)" <james.berry5@ontario.ca>, "Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY)" <kevin.denheijer@ontario.ca>
Date: Tue, 14 Nov 2017 15:04:30 -0500

Checking on that. Laura, those numbers came from your office so I imagine they're accurate.

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the Rogers network.

From: McPhail, Blane (OPO)
Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2017 2:40 PM
To: Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY); @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management
Cc: Gallant, Laura (MOHLTC); Berry, James (ENERGY); Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY)
Subject: RE: Statement from Brockville Recorder and Times

Thanks Colin. Do we know if Brockville General has taken advantage of our audit/retrofit programs like other hospitals have? If so, would be good to include that as an example over Sudbury.

From: Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)
Sent: November-14-17 2:34 PM
To: @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management
Cc: Gallant, Laura (MOHLTC); Berry, James (ENERGY); Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY)
Subject: Statement from Brockville Recorder and Times

Hi all,

Below is a statement we've put together based on a recent hospital LTE we sent out to London media. It is a bit long, but it does address the wide-ranging criticisms put forth by the Taxpayers Federation. Let us know if you have any comments.

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation is cherry-picking from hospital hydro bills, while failing to see the bigger picture on both the healthcare and energy systems in Ontario.

Since coming into office, we've increased hospital funding by 59 per cent. This trend continued in the 2017 Budget, which delivered \$53 million in funding (a 4.4 per cent increase) for the Brockville General Hospital. In fact, all hospitals in the province are seeing funding increases. This is allowing our hospitals to treat more patients, improve access to care and reduce wait times to some of the shortest in the country.

Meanwhile, we've made investments in our electricity system that have left it significantly cleaner, having eliminated coal generation in our province. We have virtually eliminated smog days in Ontario, which is an enormous public health achievement. A Toronto Vital Signs report shows that premature deaths and hospitalizations as a result of air pollution in that region have dropped by 23 per cent and 41 per cent respectively since 2004. The Taxpayers Federation ignores the fact that eliminating coal has saved billions in health care costs over the years and will continue to do so, for generations to come.

The reality is that hospitals spend an average of only 1.6 per cent of their total operating budgets on electricity bills. That means over 98 per cent of hospital budgets go towards their other priorities – hiring

nurses and doctors, keeping wait times low, and ensuring patients have access to high-quality services, where and when they need them.

Ontario hospitals are also eligible for a range of programs, like saveONenergy's audit and retrofit initiatives, to help lower their energy bills by becoming more energy efficient. For example, Sudbury's Health Sciences North received more than \$275,000 in help for energy efficiency upgrades, which have resulted in over \$500,000 savings each year in energy costs.

On July 1, electricity rates for hospitals dropped by two to four per cent because of our Fair Hydro Plan. Rates for all residential customers dropped significantly – 25 per cent on average across the province. And any rate increases will be held to the rate of inflation for four years, while we continue to work hard to take costs out of our electricity system.

We are already hearing that these reductions are making a difference in the pocketbooks of families and businesses. For hospitals, the savings from the Fair Hydro Plan and programs like SaveOnEnergy are building on the health care investments we've made each and every year, and ensure our hospitals can stay focused on putting patients first.

Colin Nekolaichuk | Press Secretary
Office of the Hon. Glenn Thibeault | Minister of Energy
T: 416-325-2690 C: 647-504-4928
colin.nekolaichuk@ontario.ca