RE: Media Scan Update: G&M Article

From: "LeBlanc, Jenna (MOF)" <jenna.leblanc@ontario.ca>
To: "Thompson, Scott (MOF)" <scott.thompson@ontario.ca>
Date: Mon, 23 Apr 2018 07:06:52 -0400

Sorry Scott I updated Dave right after the call and should have included you. Materials will be shared with MOs today I. I will share to ours as an FYI but no other action at this time. Monitoring for now.

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From: Thompson, Scott (MOF) <Scott.Thompson@ontario.ca>
Date: Sunday, Apr 22, 2018, 6:28 PM
To: LeBlanc, Jenna (MOF) <Jenna.LeBlanc@ontario.ca>
Cc: McLean, David (MOF) <David.McLean@ontario.ca>
Subject: FW: Media Scan Update: G&M Article

Anything come out of that call, Jenna? MOF have any work to do?
Thanks
Scott

From: Sullivan, Bryant (TBS) <Bryant.J.Sullivan@ontario.ca>
Date: Sunday, Apr 22, 2018, 11:28 AM
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Subject: Media Scan Update: G&M Article

Hi all, sharing a quick update on coverage of yesterday's article:

- The G&M continues to promote the article on social media (appears to be on a schedule of one tweet every two hours). Some tweets are linking to Matthew McClearn's Twitter account (although his is low profile – i.e. 11 followers and no tweets)
  - There appears to be no additional coverage of the article from other outlets (no other outlets have run articles relating to "Fair Hydro" or "hydro accounting")
    - The Toronto Sun did run an opinion piece, pasted below, that is critical of hydro costs and quotes the Auditor General:
      - "Sound familiar? Kathleen Wynne, the current Premier, has a pre-election plan to temporarily lower hydro bills by 25% by spending $39.4 billion - an $18.4 billion loan for

the rate reduction itself and $21 billion in interest down the road. However, after the election electricity rates will again start rising through 2021 and by 2028 ratepayers will pay more than the actual cost of electricity "to pay back the borrowings," Ontario Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk reported in 2017."

We 'll continue to monitor, and provide a nother update on the call at 5 p . m.

Bryant

Sorry Howie, you were right about Hydro
Toronto Sun
Sun Apr 22 2018
Page: A15
Section: Comment
Source: Toronto Sun

Howard Hampton's preoccupation with hydro issues back when he ran for the Premier's job in 2003 was called an "obsession" by the grey, old Globe & Mail.

We made some fun of him in these pages as well.

But it turns out Hampton was ahead of his time, a prophet of coming electromagnetic calamity whose political concerns about hydro privatization and rising rates were at least in part prophetic.

Enough so that Hampton has earned an "I told you so" and our humble apologies.

Meanwhile, much, and little has changed on the hydro file in the intervening 15 years.

Then, as now, rising electricity rates were an election issue and the Progressive Conservative government of the day capped rates in response to public pressure.

Sound familiar? Kathleen Wynne, the current Premier, has a pre-election plan to temporarily lower hydro bills by 25% by spending $39.4 billion - an $18.4 billion loan for the rate reduction itself and $21 billion in interest down the road.

However, after the election electricity rates will again start rising through 2021 and by 2028 ratepayers will pay more than the actual cost of electricity "to pay back the borrowings," Ontario Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk reported in 2017.

A similar example of shortsighted mismanagement? The Liberals'decision to privatize a majority interest in Hydro One in exchange for a one-time, fire-sale price of $9 billion to temporarily balance the provincial budget in an election year.

That $9 billion makes up for a quarter of the temporary rate reduction and as Sun columnist Lorrie Goldstein pointed out this week amounts to selling the furniture to pay the mortgage - except "you can only sell the furniture once."

The newly privatized Hydro One then bought part ownership in a polluting, coalfired U.S. power plant and 800-acre toxic sludge farm.

Hydro One customers have seen growing power outages and billing hassles, and were outraged when the utility proposed seniors and others struggling to cope with rising bills should pre-pay their bills. The Liberals were also forced to pass legislation outlawing winter disconnections.

Now we've learned the $6.2 million-a-year CEO of Hydro One will get a $10.7-million severance package if he's terminated courtesy of Hydro ratepayers.

Wynne has defended the salary and called Ontario PC leader Doug Ford's threat to fire the CEO and the entire board "a slogan masquerading as policy."

Clearly board turnover alone won't lower rates. But it is a symbolic statement of intent that fixing hydro to drive economic growth and ensure people can afford their bills is a critical priority for the province.

Wynne in fact has been offering slogans masquerading as policy for hydro, health care and other public services.

And that hasn't served us so well.

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