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Subject: Hansard: Potts to thibeault -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

INSTANT HANSARD

>> MPP Potts: Well, thank you, Speaker. My question's to the Minister of energy. Now this week I'm so delighted to say, we all know that we passed legislation with the government's fair hydro plan which will lower electricity bills by 25% on average across the province. This change is going to result in significant and much needed relief for every House hold in Ontario, and I know my constituents in Beaches- East York are looking forward for their discounted hydro bills in the coming months. However there are other elements of the government's plan that provide additional supports particularly to communities who need it most. Many low-income Ontarians are taking advantage of the Ontario electricity support program which provides an on-bill subsidy to those qualifying for the program. And inted -- I understand the fair hydro plan will be expanding on this program much so, Speaker, would the Minister please provide the House more details on how the oesp is being expanded for the benefit of low income families and individuals across --

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'd like to thank the member for the question and of course on his hard work on this file for his constituents in Beaches- East York as well. Unlike the opposition parties, our government has made support for vulnerable communities a central pillar of our plan. The official opposition have no plan. The third party forgot to talk about vulnerable Ontario in their energy plan, Mr. Speaker. We didn't. Mr. Speaker, we'll use existing fund through the Ontario energy board that they already have to expand the oesp program based on our direction, Mr. Speaker. The on-bill rebates offered to recipients have increased by 50% with the maximum credit now \$900 a year, Mr. Speaker, and a special credit for those with unique electricity needs. They can see that credit, Mr. Speaker, up to \$1,300. The expanded program. Not only offers higher credits but is also accessible to more people because we have increased eligibility for the program, Mr. Speaker. We heard, we will acted and we listened.

>>MPP Potts: Thank you, Speaker. Thank you to the Minister for the incredible work that he is doing to make electricity affordable for all Ontarians. On this side of the House we were so thrilled to see that bill pass and I know that Ontarians are asking, because the opposition on the other side of the House, what were they thinking? How could they be voting against lower people's electricity bills? Ott E.C. Program provides supports to low income House holds in my community and I'm proud our government is demonstrating our government by helping these people in expanding the program. Expansion of oesp is not the only social initiative being taken in the fair hydro plan. All taxpayers will receive the savings of 25% on ample there are other programs which would support savings of upwards of 40 and 50%, Speaker, for certain customers who qualify.

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also want to thank the member for that follow-up. Speaker, one of the other programs that would be expanded under our fair hydro plan is one designed to lower delivery rates and that's called the rrrp. This program provides the subsidy that lowers distribution costs for those in the most expensive-to-serve areas of our province. That's 800,000 families, Mr. Speaker, that will see a 40 to 50% reduction. I could only assume the opposition voted against that, Mr. Speaker, because that 40 to 50% reduction was too much too soon, Mr. Speaker. Just like when you're talking about bringing forward a minimum wage that will help families in this province. That's too much too soon, Mr. Speaker. But what about part-time workers to get paid the same as full-time workers, Mr. Speaker ?

I know for the official opposition too much too soon, Mr. Speaker. 100,000 new child care spaces. Free tuition, too much too soon.

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