

**From:** Energy In The News (ENERGY) [energynews@ontario.ca]  
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## INSTANT HANSARD

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>>MPP Rinaldi: My question's to the Minister of energy. Minister, last year the **Premier** said our essential goal for this government making everyday life more affordable for the people of Ontario. While our economy's doing well, not every family's seeing the impact on their personal budgets. The cost of electricity has become a concern for many in my community. I heard from many people in the most rural parts of my riding like Landing. I not people of Ontario were eager to see the government take action. Our government took a big stem forward ennuerg clean and reliable electricity is affordable to everyone in Ontario. The fair hydro plan passed last session is a 25% reduction average to all House holds in the province, no loopholes, no exceptions. Mr. Speaker, to the Minister, when does the fair hydro plan to -- begin to lower bills and how will it help House holds across the province?

>>Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also want to thank the member from Northumberland-quinte west for that question. Of course for all of his hard work that he does day in and day out for his constituents. Mr. Speaker, our government inherited an electricity system that was in disrepair, Mr. Speaker. We invested \$50 billion in rebuilding the system and eliminating dirty coal from our generation mix. However we asked one generation alone to pay the freight of these investments, for everyone before and after. And that's why, Mr. Speaker, this spring we took action. We passed legislation which has, since July 1st, lowered electricity bills by the full 25%, on average, for every House hold in this province. And under our plan, Mr. Speaker, rates will increase no more than -- Inflation for the next four years, Mr. Speaker. We're proud of the work that we've done, Mr. Speaker, and we're putting our plan into action to make life more affordable for Ontarians.

>>MPP Rinaldi: Thank you, Minister, for that response. I know that this has been a positive initiative for the families of small businesses in my riding and indeed across the province. And, Minister, I can testify that I've seen the difference in my own bill. The 25% reduction on average will help to curb costs for people of Ontario across the board, while other programs provide the type of support that keeps our province fair and competitive. However, there are also other elements of the government plan that provides additional support to particular communities who need it. Many low-income Ontarians take advantage of the Ontario electricity support program the O.E.S. B., which provides unbill subsidy for those who qualify for the program. I understand under the fair hydro plan the government expanded this program. Could the Minister provide more details -- Programs that are being expanded for the benefit of those who need the most in our province?

>>Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I just want to acknowledge the work that this member has done to talk about those who are vulnerable in his community and across, right across the province, Mr. Speaker. With our governments over the summer, Mr. Speaker, the oesp program for example that helps vulnerable consumers, it has been expanded by 50% with a maximum credit of now \$900 a year and a special credit for those with unique electricity needs, Mr. Speaker, offers a maximum of \$1,300 a year. Another program that was expanded over the summer, Mr. Speaker, is designed to lower delivery rates called the triple-rp. This program provides a substantial subsidy that lowers distribution -- excuse me, Mr. Speaker. That lowers distribution costs for those in the most expensive-to-serve areas of our province. While the opposition chose to vote against expanding these programs to help people, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that our fair hydro plan is providing real and substantial relief --

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