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Subject: Hansard: Hatfield to Hoskins-- Hydro rate reduction Plan

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INSTANT HANSARD

>>MPP Hatfield: Thank you, Speaker. My question this morning is for the **Premier**. Good morning, **Premier**. I have a sad and an unbelievable story for you. My constituent, Larry Brunner, is on Ontario works. He gets the max, \$706 a month. His rent is \$406. He has to pay back \$35.30 as part of an overpayment. So that leaves him with \$264.70 a month to live on. But his hydro bill has gone up to \$273.40. So he's \$8.70 in the hole before he even thinks about how he's going to get anything to eat or pay any other bills. Speaker, does this government still believe. The flawed energy policies are going to make life easier for everyone in Ontario?

>>Minister Thibeault: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'd like to thank the member for bringing forward that question, and I would like to maybe talk with the MPP Afterwards to see if there's anything we can do to try and help this individual, Mr. Speaker, because I don't know all of the circumstances that relate to that. But there are programs that are in place, Mr. Speaker, to actually help individuals like that, Mr. Speaker. Because that's why we brought forward the Ontario electricity support programs, Mr. Speaker, to S to help individuals like that. And we are working with the ministry of community and social services, Mr. Speaker, to actually ensure that all O.W. Clients, Mr. Speaker, actually get that -- And we're actually working with the C.R.A. To ensure there is no requirement for a web signature because we do want to see those rebates go to those individuals as quickly as they can because it is in place, Mr. Speaker, to help individuals just like what the member opposite was talking about.

>>MPP Hatfield: Speaker, the rising cost of hydro is fast outpacing any increases people may get on Ontario works or the odsp. Even with a 17% cut to hydro bills that's coming sometime next summer, it would leave Larry \$37.78 to live on for the month. That's \$1.26 a day. \$1.26 a day to live on after your 17% cut that you say is coming sometime next summer. Speaker, what's it going to take to get this government to take better care of people like Larry Brunner, people who need their help the most?

>> Minister thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, I thank the member for the question and highlighting these issues, and that's why, Mr. Speaker, we acted with the fair hydro plan. The fair hydro plan is going to be that 25% reduction by this summer, Mr. Speaker. We're going to make sure that individuals who are on O.W. And are most vulnerable actually will see that oesp program, the Ontario electricity support program that I talked about in my previous answer, Mr. Speaker, we've increased that by 50%, Mr. Speaker. And then on top of that, we're actually allowing more individuals to qualify for this program to ensure that they can get these savings back into their pockets, Mr. Speaker. We have to, as I said before, Mr. Speaker, invest in our system, and we recognize that that costs money. And that's why we're now making sure that the fair hydro plan will bring forward a 25% reduction for everybody across the province, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

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

