

From: Energy In The News (ENERGY) [energynews@ontario.ca]
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To: @ENERGY-COMM-Issues_and_MediaRelations [ENERGY-COMM-Issues_and_MediaRelations@msgov.gov.on.ca]; Anderson, Alexandria (OPG) [alexandria.anderson@opg.com]; Armstrong, Hillary (ENERGY) [Hillary.Armstrong@ontario.ca]; Barbaro, Rachel (ENERGY) [Rachel.Barbaro@ontario.ca]; Berg, Denna (ENERGY) [Denna.Berg@ontario.ca]; Bergen, Tom (OPG) [Tom.Bergen@opg.com]; Mary Bernard [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=7e3e3e8d7f9345c2b0aab3e0fd7a79f2-Mary Bernar]; Berry, James (ENERGY) [James.Berry5@ontario.ca]; Biggs, Megan (ENERGY) [Megan.Biggs@ontario.ca]; Bozzo, John (OEB) [John.Bozzo@ontarioenergyboard.ca]; Buccilli, Lina (OEB) [Lina.Buccilli@ontarioenergyboard.ca]; Tim Butters [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=51a65d6ed8cf46629b4c4226b8a7033f-Tim Butters]; Alexandra Campbell [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=c1277e2d9ffd4c598e3819f291200a35-Alexandra C]; Campbell, David (ENERGY) [David.Campbell2@ontario.ca]; John Cannella [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=cd667c6d53774dd0a749783bb02ae89d-John Cannel]; Carson, Cheryl (ENERGY/MEDEI/MRI) [Cheryl.Carson@ontario.ca]; Cayley, Daniel (ENERGY) [Daniel.Cayley@ontario.ca]; Chatterjee, Jeet (ENERGY) [Jeet.Chatterjee@ontario.ca]; Coker, Meaghan (ENERGY) [Meaghan.Coker@ontario.ca]; Cooper, Sarah (ENERGY) [Sarah.Cooper@ontario.ca]; Crawford, Paul (OEB) [Paul.Crawford@ontarioenergyboard.ca]; Dade, Christine (ENERGY) [Christine.Dade@ontario.ca]; Andrew Dow [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=6268b334c119488b888395bba8b155d9-Andrew Dow]; Dykxhoorn, Sandra (OPG) [Sandra.Dykxhoorn@opg.com]; Esdaile, Trevor (ENERGY) [Trevor.Esdaile@ontario.ca]; Evans, Karen (ENERGY) [Karen.Evans@ontario.ca]; Chuck Farmer [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=aa83ad66edf341b4a48c3f852b674355-Chuck Farmel]; Feather, Adam (ENERGY) [Adam.Feather@ontario.ca]; Gibbs, Diana (ENERGY) [Diana.Gibbs@ontario.ca]; Gruetzner, Ted (OPG) [Ted.Gruetzner@opg.com]; Hill, Allyson (ENERGY) [Allyson.Hill@ontario.ca]; Ho, Larissa (ENERGY) [Larissa.Ho@ontario.ca]; Hume, Steen (ENERGY) [Steen.Hume@ontario.ca]; Imbrogno, Serge (ENERGY) [Serge.Imbrogno@ontario.ca]; Imlay, Patrick (ENERGY) [Patrick.Imlay@ontario.ca]; Johnson, Paul (ENERGY/MEDEI/MRI) [Paul.Johnson3@ontario.ca]; Kacaba, Jennifer (ENERGY) [Jennifer.Kacaba@ontario.ca]; Katona, Keley (ENERGY) [Keley.Katona@ontario.ca]; Kelly, Neal (OPG) [Neal.Kelly@opg.com]; Kinapen, Donna (OEB) [Donna.Kinapen@ontarioenergyboard.ca]; Kitchen, Matthew (ENERGY) [Matthew.Kitchen@ontario.ca]; Kovesfalvi, Sylvia (OEB) [Sylvia.Kovesfalvi@ontarioenergyboard.ca]; Landmann, Peter (ENERGY) [Peter.Landmann@ontario.ca]; Lars Hansen [Lars.Hansen@ontarioenergyboard.ca]; Latto-Hall, Arla (ENERGY) [Arla.Latto-Hall@ontario.ca]; Lazakis, Chloe (ENERGY) [Chloe.Lazakis@ontario.ca]; Jane Leckey [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=2d516eef12b444edaca0ee56126664b3-Jane Leckey]; Leung, Thomas (MOF) [Thomas.Leung@ontario.ca]; Lindsay, Ken (ENERGY) [Ken.Lindsay@ontario.ca]; Linington, Brenda (MOI) [Brenda.Linington@ontario.ca]; Mackie, Richard (OPG) [Richard.Mackie@opg.com]; Maguire, Lauren (ENERGY) [Lauren.Maguire@ontario.ca]; McGrath, Jessica (ENERGY) [Jessica.McGrath@ontario.ca]; Montgomery, Kaitlin (MOF) [Kaitlin.Montgomery@ontario.ca]; Naveed, Fatima (ENERGY) [SOM.Fatima.Naveed@ontario.ca]; Nikolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY) [Colin.Nikolaichuk@ontario.ca]; Nelms, Scott (MOF) [Scott.Nelms@ontario.ca]; O'Donnell, Cheryl (ENERGY) [som.Cheryl.O'Donnell@ontario.ca]; O'Riordan, Eamon (ENERGY) [Eamon.O'Riordan@ontario.ca]; Pagel, Alexa (ENERGY) [Alexa.Pagel@ontario.ca]; Pelkey, Bryan (ENERGY) [Bryan.Pelkey@ontario.ca]; Jordan Penic [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=7d23bcd450594583bb40b447b35485da-Jordan Peni]; Pitkeathly, Doreen (ENERGY) [Doreen.Pitkeathly@ontario.ca]; Poirier, Linda (ENERGY) [Linda.Poirier@ontario.ca]; Rehob, James (ENERGY) [James.Rehob@ontario.ca]; Reid, Michael (ENERGY) [Michael.Reid@ontario.ca]; Rowe, Jennifer (OPG) [Jennifer.Rowe@opg.com]; Ruttan, Craig (ENERGY) [Craig.Ruttan@ontario.ca]; Sermat-Harding, Kaili (ENERGY) [Kaili.Sermat-Harding@ontario.ca]; Shear, Dan (ENERGY) [Dan.Shear@ontario.ca]; Simmons, Valerie (ENERGY) [Valerie.Simmons@ontario.ca]; Spence Lair, Marlo (ENERGY) [Marlo.SpenceLair@ontario.ca]; Spence, Marcia (ENERGY) [Marcia.Spence@ontario.ca]; Stoiko, Andrea (ENERGY) [Andrea.Stoiko@ontario.ca]; Sweet, Edward (ENERGY) [Edward.Sweet@ontario.ca]; Syed, Usman (ENERGY) [Usman.Syed@ontario.ca]; Teliszewsky, Andrew (ENERGY) [Andrew.Teliszewsky@ontario.ca]; Thompson, Erin (ENERGY) [Erin.Thompson@ontario.ca]; Thompson, Rachel (ENERGY) [Rachel.Thompson@ontario.ca]; Todd, Brian (MOI) [Brian.Todd@ontario.ca]; Tretiakov, Ilia (ENERGY) [Ilia.Tretiakov@ontario.ca]; Visheau, Vanessa (ENERGY) [Vanessa.Visheau@ontario.ca]; Waddell, Colleen (MOF) [Colleen.Waddell@ontario.ca]; Wall, Vanda (OEB) [Vanda.Wall@ontarioenergyboard.ca]; Whittington, Matt (ENERGY) [Matt.Whittington@ontario.ca]; Wright, Lindsay (ENERGY) [Lindsay.Wright@ontario.ca]; Yadav, Saurabh

(ENERGY) [Saurabh.Yadav@ontario.ca]; Terry Young [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=872fa3f6e61a48709b11458c0c3b6ca6-Terry Young]

Subject: Hansard: Gates to Thibeault -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> MPP Gates: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the acting **Premier**. I stood up in this House many times before to try and explain to you what your hydro crisis is doing to Ontario. Manor cleaners had 30 employees with locations in Niagara Falls and St. Catharines. They're another example of a business struggling to afford their hydro cut rates. Their hydro bills in 2017 have doubled. They tell me that dry cleaners across Ontario can't raise their prices fast enough to keep up with their hydro bills. And if they do, they can't hold onto the customers who are struggling to pay their own hydro bill. My question to the acting **Premier** -- will the government commit today to make real changes to our hydro system to ensure that businesses in Ontario have the ability to stay open and equally important keep their workers employed? Thank you.

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, . Thank you for the member for -- Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very pleased to stand and rise and talk about how Ontario's fair hydro plan is going to help 500,000 small businesses and farms right across the province, Mr. Speaker. Not knowing the specifics of the business that the Honourable member mentioned, if they're a general-service business, Mr. Speaker, as the 500,000 businesses right across the province are, Mr. Speaker, they'll be receiving a 25% rate reduction, Mr. Speaker. That is significant for small businesses right across the province. I know, Mr. Speaker, we've been working with the Minister of economic development and growth to also continue to have a very Proetz Prus business climate in this province, Mr. Speaker. And that's something that we're going to continue to see in this province. Our businesses are going to grow, hire more people, create more jobs and that's something we should all be proud of. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> MPP Gates: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you, to the Minister and both Minister s that manor cleaners called me. I didn't call them about their hydro bill. And it's absolutely disgusting that the Minister would stand up and laugh at a question I'm asking about hydro when hydro in this province is in crisis. Disgusting and shameful you do that. I didn't call -- they called me. There's a real and serious problem in the hydro system in this province. To put out the flames, a pail of water. Mr. Speaker, it's not putting out the fire and it's not stopping the closures of businesses right across the province of Ontario. I ask the acting **Premier** again -- will you commit to take immediate action to help small businesses in Ontario. With their crushing hydro bills by stopping the sale of Hydro One and taking real action to lower hydro bills?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pleased once again to be able to stand and rise and talk about how all businesses, Mr. Speaker, will be getting a 25% reduction when we bring forward Ontario's fair hydro plan, Mr. Speaker. That is actually relief that is coming for businesses right across the province. Unlike that party, Mr. Speaker, that puts forward a plan that's pie in the sky, Mr. Speaker. Many of their proposals rely on vague yet-to-be-determined expert panels to be convened sometime in the future. I not P.C.S, Mr. Speaker, don't even have time to think about a plan. But on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker, they have no idea on how to deal with it. This expert panel, Mr. Speaker, with the NDP Have they heard back from anything, Mr. Speaker, yet? They have not. Let's be honest, Mr. Speaker. The feds aren't even returning their calls. Maybe that's why they're sending out the member from Bramalea-Gore-Malton to go to Ottawa. Mr. Speaker, . So to see action to help small businesses you look to this government, Mr. Speaker. To see no action, look at the other side.

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