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Subject: Hansard: Fedeli to Sousa -- Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

INSTANT HANSARD

>>MPP Fedeli: Good morning, Speaker. My question is for the **Premier**. It's not just the financial accountability officers who weighed in on the government's hydro scheme. The auditor general attended the hydro committee hearings last week and exposed yet another secret. The government plans on borrowing all these billions and not declaring it on their books. Well, the Liberals got caught again. The auditor said, quote -- for obvious reasons, this is not allowed under Canadian public sector accounting standards. They tried to bury all these billions and not have the cost of their scheme show up anywhere. Did they think they were not going to get caught, Speaker ? I ask the **Premier** why does it always take the auditor general, the financial accountability officer or the OPP For the people of Ontario to get to the truth?

>>Minister Sousa: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question. Let's remind everyone in this House d that process that's being proposed is being endorsed by pricewaterhouse, by a number of accounting professionals in the system. It's being enabled to protect the interest of ratepayers and consumers, Mr. Speaker. It's enabling them to benefit from lower costs today and taking an asset that's registered and enabling it to be valued over a longer period of time and that is what's being established. It's being established to reduce rates today and enable us to provide for a good system and clean reliable system throughout the future, Mr. Speaker. And the member opposite may oppose that. He may wish not to provide for a lowering of rates. He may decide that it's not appropriate for an asset to be registered and extended over a period of time, but professionals in the accounting system has decided that that is appropriate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>MPP Fedeli: That's not what the auditor general decided. Two weeks ago we asked the government why they co-opted at o.p.g.le as the financing arm of this financing scheme. We asked if it's because the billions this hide rode scheme will add to o.p.g.'s debt won't show up on the province's books. Despite all their denials, the auditor general has confirmed that's exactly what this government was planning. They plan to spend billions now, bury that money on o.p.g.'s books and not have the province account for any of this debt. But the auditor general says no way. They got caught yet again. I ask the **Premier**, now that your scheme has been revealed, will you drop this charade with O.P.G. And properly account for these billions on the province's books?

>>Minister Sousa: So, Mr. Speaker, again I remind the member opposite that the process that's been delivered here has been done in consultations with numerous experts, over 1 jurisdictions in north America have provided and utilizing similar accounting practice within the system. We have been working with O.P.G., who by the way has the next expertise in assisting with the financing. They currently manage over \$18 billion in nuclear funds that can be used in infrastructure and proceed in this field to help administer long-term financing, Mr. Speaker. This is not a novel approach. This has been done in other jurisdictionsment duke energy in North Carolina, Long Island lightning. We are moving forward to help consumers to help our people in Ontario, to help our businesses to be more competitive. The member opposite obviously don't have a plan. They don't want to invest. They've made that clear and now they're going to vote down something that's going to help the people of Ontario and our businesses, and that, Mr. Speaker ,, is a shame.

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