Neil Brodie

From:	Neil Brodie
Sent:	September 13, 2016 6:53 PM
To:	Rosemarie Leclair
Subject:	Re: Morning News Clippings - Tuesday, September 13, 2016

They are fine on my phone.

From: Rosemarie Leclair
Sent: Tuesday, September 13, 2016 5:42 PM
To: Neil Brodie
Subject: Fwd: Morning News Clippings - Tuesday, September 13, 2016

Why are the clippings weird? Is it just my phone?

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Infomart Newsletters" <Infomart.newsletters@infomart.com>
> **To:** "Rosemarie Leclair" <Rosemarie.Leclair@ontarioenergyboard.ca>
> **Subject: Morning News Clippings - Tuesday, September 13, 2016**
>
> View in Browser<https://app.infomart.com/login/newsletter/714/2043/view-issue/2854/2876/212634>
> Morning News Clippings
> powered by: [Infomart]
>
> Date: Tuesday, September 13, 2016
> Edited by: Paul Crawford (Paul.Crawford@ontarioenergyboard.ca <mailto:Paul.Crawford@ontarioenergyboard.ca>)
> Contact Editor<mailto:Paul.Crawford@ontarioenergyboard.ca>
>
> Clippings Summary
> News - 68 Results
> [The Globe and Mail]
> Liberals unveil hydro subsidy as Wynne begins pivot to election
> The Globe and Mail - Tue Sep 13 2016
> Tone: Negative
> Byline:ADRIAN MORROW
>
> Ad Value:$16,093
> Reach: 309154 Page: A1
> The Ontario Liberals are bringing in a new 8-per-cent subsidy for residential electricity bills - less than a year after ending a 10-percent subsidy - in a bid to cool voter anger over one of the province's most persistent pocketbook ...

[Toronto Star]
Liberal's hydro hack a quick political fix
Toronto Star - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Martin Regg Cohn

Ad Value:$14,017
Reach: 361323 Page: A14
The 2018 Ontario election is underway today, two years early. The first campaign announcement: Hydro bills will be reduced 8 per cent by January as an HST rebate, just in time for a positive pre-election impression. ...

[Toronto Star]
Hold the politicking; Throne speech
Toronto Star - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Positive
Ad Value:$14,666
Reach: 361323 Page: A12
There was some good news and some good old-fashioned politicking in the throne speech that Ontario's Liberal government hopes will carry it through to the next election scheduled for 2018. The good news comes in the form of an announcement that the ...

[Toronto Star]
Hydro bill rebate and other highlights from throne speech
Toronto Star - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:Rob Ferguson

Ad Value:$2,949
Reach: 361323 Page: A14
Hydro HST rebate Eight-per-cent rebate, equivalent to the provincial portion of the 13-per-cent HST, on electricity bills starting in January. Rural hydro ...

[thestar.com]
Wynne announces 8 per cent HST cut from hydro bills in throne speech
thestar.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Robert Benzie(
https://author.thestar.com/»<https://author.thestar.com/content/thestar/authors.benzie_rob.html>)Rob Ferguson(
https://author.thestar.com/»<https://author.thestar.com/content/thestar/authors.ferguson_rob.html>)
Reach: 999000
Electricity ratepayers will no longer be charged the 8-per-cent provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax on their hydro bills, Premier Kathleen Wynne's government has announced. ...

[thestar.com]
Five highlights from Kathleen Wynne's throne speech
thestar.com - Mon Sep 12 2016

Tone: Neutral
Byline:Rob Ferguson(
https://author.thestar.com/»<https://author.thestar.com/content/thestar/authors.ferguson_rob.html>)
Reach: 999000
Highlights of Monday's throne speech: Hydro HST rebate 8 per cent rebate, equivalent to the provincial portion of the 13 per cent HST, on electricity bills starting in January. Rural hydro rebate Rebates of about 20 per cent on hydro bills for ...

[The Globe and Mail]
Wynne's way: Rob the poor, help the rich; As the big thinkers at Queen's Park bask in air-conditioned bliss, more and more folks are struggling to pay their bills
The Globe and Mail - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:MARGARET WENTE

Ad Value:$18,218
Reach: 309154 Page: A13
Out in rural Ontario, far away from the lush grounds of Queen's Park, a crisis is brewing. Electricity rates have soared so high that many people can't afford to pay their hydro bills. Local charities have a name ...

[THE NATIONAL]
Ontario promises electricity bill rebates in throne speech
THE NATIONAL - Mon Sep 12 2016, 10:00pm ET
Tone: Neutral
PETER MANSBRIDGE (HOST): Ontario's government laid out new priorities in the province's throne speech today, including new rebates to offset high energy prices. The rebate is meant as relief to high electricity ...

[Ottawa Sun]
Throne speech all smoke and mirrors
Ottawa Sun - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Jerry Agar

Ad Value:$1,050
Reach: 45442 Page: A17
The Ontario Liberals took a step toward clinging to power Monday by fiddling with the power - again In Premier Kathleen Wynne's throne speech, the government said it plans to remove the provincial portion of the HST ...

[Ottawa Sun]
'Solving' the problems; Take with one hand, give with the other
Ottawa Sun - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Christina Blizzard

Ad Value:$1,664
Reach: 45442 Page: A4

How clever Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals are. They create expensive problems that hurt low and middle-income folk the most. Then they miraculously ride to the rescue - with even more costly fixes to the problems they created in the first place. ...

[National Post]
Ontario and its mea culpa
National Post - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Ad Value:$7,915
Reach: 159480 Page: A7
Ontario's nearly 13-year-old Liberal government announced a slate of new, purportedly consumer-friendly initiatives Monday. In her speech from the throne, the lieutenant-governor said Premier Kathleen Wynne's government would create 100,000 ...

[Ottawa Sun]
Wynne locks in soaring hydro rates
Ottawa Sun - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Ad Value:$676
Reach: 45442 Page: A16
Premier Kathleen Wynne announced Monday that on Jan. 1, 2017, she's removing the 8% provincial sales tax on the electricity bills of Ontarians. That's the 8% tax her predecessor, Dalton McGuinty, imposed on Ontarians' hydro ...

[Ottawa Sun]
Wynne's $1B Hydro; Throne speech offers up rebate to Ontario users
Ottawa Sun - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Positive
Byline:Shawn Jeffords

Ad Value:$1,323
Reach: 45442 Page: A4
Liberal Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault insists that Ontario is in such good financial shape, it can afford to give away $1 billion by cutting the HST offhydro bills. Thibeault made the comments moments after his government ...

[News - National Post]
David Reevely: Kathleen Wynne looks to save her job by saving Ontario voters $130 a year on their hydro bills
News - National Post - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:David Reevely, Ottawa Citizen
Reach: 607500
The provincial government is giving up $1 billion a year by taking its share of the sales tax off Ontario electricity bills, Premier Kathleen Wynne revealed in the speech from the throne for a new legislative session Monday. It'll save ...

[News - National Post]
Ontario government to knock HST off electricity bills, increase child care spaces: Throne Speech

News - National Post - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Ashley Csanady
Reach: 607500
A promise to knock the provincial sales tax off electricity bills and create 100,000 new child care spaces anchors the Ontario government's Throne Speech delivered Monday. Premier Kathleen Wynne is targeting voters' pocketbooks and family concerns ...

[The Hamilton Spectator]
Throne speech comes with power bill relief; Liberals promise to remove Ontario portion of HST from electricity bills
The Hamilton Spectator - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Keith Leslie The Canadian Press

Ad Value:$2,245
Reach: 103267 Page: A10
Ontario consumers will get some relief from skyrocketing electricity rates under a Liberal government initiative to remove the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax from ...

[Windsor Star]
Hydro rebate a 'drop in the bucket,' MPP Gretzky says; Ontario government pledges to remove 8% of HST from bills
Windsor Star - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Positive
Byline:Chris Thompson

Ad Value:$3,084
Reach: 54680 Page: A2
An eight per cent rebate on hydro bills announced in Monday's provincial Throne Speech is "a drop in the bucket," Windsor West MPP Lisa Gretzky says. And to prove her point she'll be dropping hundreds of hydro bills ...

[WORLD REPORT]
Liberals to hit reset button Monday with updated throne speech
WORLD REPORT - Mon Sep 12 2016, 8:00am ET
Tone: Neutral
Byline:LORENDA REDDEKOPP; KATHLEEN WYNNE; MIER SYEMIATYCKI; ANDREA HORVATH
Reach: 528000
DAVID COMMON (HOST): The Ontario government says it's hitting the reset button with a speech from the throne later today. It surprised opposition parties when it prorogued the legislature last week. All this comes as the Liberal government's ...

[Times-Journal (St.Thomas)]
Hydro rebate nothing but political pandering, Yurek; Elgin-Middlesex- London MPP JeffYurek fearful proposed rebate may result in more debt
Times-Journal (St.Thomas) - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:Jennifer Bieman

Ad Value:$640
Reach: 8859 Page: A3
Ontario ratepayers are about to get an eight per cent break on their electricity bills - but not everyone thinks it's a bright idea. Elgin-Middlesex-London MPP Jeff Yurek has a list of misgivings after Monday's throne speech, ...

[The Sault Star]
Liberal strategy revealed
The Sault Star - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Jerry Agar

Ad Value:$787
Reach: 17077 Page: A6
Bad news for anyone who thinks the Ontario Liberals' freshness date was years ago and it is well past time for them to be replaced - they may win the next election. How will they do it? By employing their timetested Lie-and-Buy strategy. They will ...

[The Chatham Daily News]
MPP says Liberals playing 'shell game' with hydro rates; Nicholls believes provincial budget will be balanced on 'backs of Ontarians'
The Chatham Daily News - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:Ellwood Shreve

Ad Value:$566
Reach: 15320 Page: A1 / Front
Rick Nicholls said the Liberal government's attempt to "hit the reset button" by proroguing government last week and delivering a throne speech on Monday "is just too little too late." The Chatham-Kent Essex MPP is particularly critical of Kathleen ...

[Stratford Beacon-Herald]
What Wynne must do in the fall session
Stratford Beacon-Herald - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Ad Value:$282
Reach: 10143 Page: A5
Ontario's government needs a fresh start, which is why Premier Kathleen Wynne has prorogued the legislature and promised a throne speech for Monday. With less than two years before the next election, the provincial Liberals are staggering in the ...

[Ottawa Sun]
Giveaway; Brown, Horwath slam rebate plan
Ottawa Sun - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Shawn Jeffords

Ad Value:$956
Reach: 45442 Page: A5
Just call it the "Raymond Cho Hydro Benefit." That's what Progres -sive Conservative

Leader Patrick Brown dubbed the 8% HST rebate on hydro bills announced Monday. Brown said had it not been for Cho's ...

[Peterborough Examiner]
Leal pleased with lifting of sales tax from hydro bills
Peterborough Examiner - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Jessica Nyznik

Ad Value:$1,122
Reach: 19693 Page: A1 / Front
With electricity rates top of mind for constituents, Peterborough's MPP is pleased with the Ontario government's latest plans announced during its Throne Speech Monday. The provincial government has promised to cut the 8 per ...

[London Free Press]
Grits plug hydro savings; Area opposition MPPs say throne speech HST rebate vow is really about saving the Wynne government
London Free Press - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Jonathan Sher

Ad Value:$3,477
Reach: 70995 Page: A1 / Front
Like wind turbines whose spinning provokes outrage in Southwest Ontario, the province ' s Liberals have spun hydro rates again, promising to scrap the HST just months after it swept aside abigger benefit. ...

[tvo.org]
The Ontario Liberals at the Mid-Point | TVO.org<http://tvo.org/video/programs/the-agenda-with-steve-paikin/the-ontario-liberals-at-the-mid-point>
tvo.org - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://tvo.org/video/programs/the-agenda-with-steve-paikin/the-ontario-liberals-at-the-mid-point>
The Agenda examines why Premier Kathleen Wynne's personal popularity rating is at an all-time low.

[Welland Tribune]
Mud slinging possible at the plowing match
Welland Tribune - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Jim Merriam

Ad Value:$516
Reach: 13164 Page: A4
Ontario's major annual plowing match is one of the few events where Toronto-centric politicians pay lip service to rural Ontario. The International Plowing Match and Rural Expo (IPM) is being held this year in Wellington County near Harriston, ...

[Beach Mirror]
Opposition leaders take aim at Liberal plan to rebate HST on soaring hydro bills
Beach Mirror - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:David Nickle

Ad Value:$69
Reach: 57750
Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne's proposed plan to rebate Hydro One customers the equivalent of the Ontario portion of the HST - about eight per cent - drew fire from opposition leaders. Ontario ...

[North Bay Nugget]
Liberals cut HST off hydro; Northerners can take another 20 per cent off their bills
North Bay Nugget - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Positive
Byline:Shawn Jeffords

Ad Value:$1,225
Reach: 11505 Page: A1 / Front
Liberal Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault insists Ontario is in such good financial shape, it can afford to give away $1 billion by cutting the HST offhydro bills. Thibeault made the comments Monday moments after his government ...

[Broadcast news]
Broadcast news
Broadcast news - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
--- (Ont-Legis-Returns) P-C Leader Patrick Brown says the Liberal government's plan to remove the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax from hydro bills is just a "Band-Aid solution." The plan ...

[London Free Press]
Giving and taking
London Free Press - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:Jim White

Ad Value:$365
Reach: 70995 Page: A5
Regarding the online article Liberals promise 8 % cut to hydro bill (Sept. 12). So, Premier Kathleen Wynne, please explain again how you are going to help me pay my bills ? You just announced that, starting in January, my ...

[The Hamilton Spectator]
Proof of a new start remains to be seen
The Hamilton Spectator - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Positive
Byline:Howard Elliott

Ad Value:$2,438
Reach: 103267 Page: A8
The day after the Wynne government's attempt to "reset" the agenda, the most common question seems to be: Will it work? If that's the measure, the answer is probably no. Saving the average consumer $130 per year on hydro isn't dramatic. ...

[www.cbc.ca]
Ontario government to bring in electricity bill rebates - Toronto - CBC News<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-government-throne-speech-electricity-rates-1.3758002>
www.cbc.ca - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-government-throne-speech-electricity-rates-1.3758002>
The Ontario government promised in a throne speech today that it will provide rebates to urban and rural residents and small businesses to help offset high electricity rates.

[www.citynews.ca]
Liberals promise to remove Ontario portion of HST from hydro bills - CityNews<http://www.citynews.ca/2016/09/12/liberals-promise-to-remove-ontario-portion-of-hst-from-hydro-bills/>
www.citynews.ca - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://www.citynews.ca/2016/09/12/liberals-promise-to-remove-ontario-portion-of-hst-from-hydro-bills/>
Ontario home owners, farmers and small businesses will get some relief from soaring electricity prices starting in January when the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax is removed from hydro bills.

[www.standard-freeholder.com]
Give with one hand, take with another | Cornwall Standard Freeholder<http://www.standard-freeholder.com/2016/09/12/farmgate-give-with-one-hand-take-with-another>
www.standard-freeholder.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://www.standard-freeholder.com/2016/09/12/farmgate-give-with-one-hand-take-with-another>
Paul Crawford noted on Monday, September 12, 2016
OESP and OEB are mentioned.
Two weeks ago this column put figures behind the continuing rhetoric of Ontario residents having trouble paying their electricity bills, by publishing the actual totals as at December 31, 2015, 8.5 months and two rate increases ago, of those with ...

[globalnews.ca]
Ontario Liberals promise to remove provincial portion of HST from hydro bills | Globalnews.ca<http://globalnews.ca/news/2934714/ontario-liberals-promise-to-remove-provincial-portion-of-hst-from-hydro-bills/>
globalnews.ca - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://globalnews.ca/news/2934714/ontario-liberals-promise-to-remove-

provincial-portion-of-hst-from-hydro-bills/>
Ontario's Liberal government has announced plans to remove the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax (HST) from hydro bills to offset soaring costs for ratepayers.

[Sudbury Star]
Hydro sale a bad deal
Sudbury Star - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Positive
Byline:Bob Hibbs

Ad Value:$509
Reach: 14934 Page: A10
There seems to be a lot of smiling faces in the political arena as of late. I guess you can't blame them, given the bad shape of our infrastructure. It is clear that our roads need to be addressed now, but at what cost? Well, this is one face that ...

[North Bay Nugget]
Heat turned up on Kathleen Wynne; Hydro-themed hot sauce labels poke fun at the premier
North Bay Nugget - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:Gord Young

Ad Value:$1,033
Reach: 11505 Page: A1 / Front
Peter Magill has decided to have a little fun with all the heat Premier Kathleen Wynne has been taking over skyrocketing hydro rates. The marketing and communications co-ordinator at Buckstone Inc. Gifts and Gourmet Foods has ...

[www.thespec.com]
Rising hydro bills are continuing to shock the public<http://www.thespec.com/news-story/6853774-rising-hydro-bills-are-continuing-to-shock-the-public/>
www.thespec.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://www.thespec.com/news-story/6853774-rising-hydro-bills-are-continuing-to-shock-the-public/>
Paul Crawford noted on Monday, September 12, 2016
OEB is mentioned.
Ornella Montini has tried installing LED lights, reducing her air conditioning use, hang drying her laundry, and using electricity when prices are cheapest — but nothing seems to stop the rise of her hydro bill.

[Peterborough Examiner]
Community engagement sought; As PDI sale opponents argue council isn't listeninsg to them, council agrees to a community engagement plan for the potential sale to Hydro One
Peterborough Examiner - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Joelle Kovach

Ad Value:$1,322

Reach: 19693 Page: A1 / Front
After hearing from a dozen upset citizens Monday night, council voted to develop a new plan to inform people - and hear their opinions - on the prospective sale of the publically owned utility to Hydro One. About 80 people ...

[Peterborough This Week]
Councillor calls for improved public engagement during Peterborough Distribution Inc. discussion
Peterborough This Week - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:Jamie Steel

Ad Value:$82
Reach: 47038
PETERBOROUGH -- In an effort to better inform the public about any potential sale of Peterborough's electricity distribution company, City staff have been directed to report back to council with a comprehensive community engagement plan. ...

[The Chatham Daily News]
C-K seeks answers on gas merger; Sulman enters motion asking for task force
The Chatham Daily News - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:Trevor Terfloth

Ad Value:$256
Reach: 15320 Page: A1 / Front
After a recent announcement on the purchase of Union Gas' parent company, Spectra Energy, Chatham-Kent councillors want to ensure the head office and its jobs remain in the area. Chatham Coun. Doug Sulman entered a ...

[The Globe and Mail]
Investors swoon over green equities; Leaders in this sector are poised to grow with expanding demand, advisers say, as institutional investors ditch oil and coal and other climate-change-inducing industries
The Globe and Mail - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:JOEL SCHLESINGER

Ad Value:$23,781
Reach: 309154 Page: B3
Green equities often take a back seat in investment portfolios. But they are increasingly de rigueur among institutional investors who are divesting themselves of climate-changeinducing industries such as oil, gas and coal. ...

[Waterloo Region Record]
Kitchener's natural gas bills to jump $75 due to cap and trade
Waterloo Region Record - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Catherine Thompson, Record staff

Ad Value:$2,769
Reach: 63465 Page: B1
Kitchener residents will see their natural gas bills increase by at least $75 a year under a new cap-and-trade emissions control system introduced by the provincial Liberals, city councillors ...

[Today's Farmer]
Policy needs to be bolder, says think tank
Today's Farmer - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Ad Value:$201
Page: A33
The federal and provincial agriculture ministers need to be far bolder than their past five-year policies, say agriculture economists with Agri-Food Economic Systems Research. "The risk is that the dialogue and ultimate agreement will be both too ...

[National Post]
'Keystoning' Energy East
National Post - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Markham Hislop

Ad Value:$9,198
Reach: 159480 Page: FP7
Is the National Energy Board review of the Energy East pipeline process broken, after three panel members resigned last week? Not in the least. But getting us all to believe that it's broken is part of the ...

[Ottawa Citizen]
NEB panel resignations create uncertainty over Energy East
Ottawa Citizen - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Dan Healing

Ad Value:$2,236
Reach: 114846 Page: B11
Doubts are growing over the fate of the Energy East Pipeline after members of the National Energy Board panel examining the project resigned, leaving questions over how the review will proceed. Analyst Dirk Lever of ...

[London Free Press]
Enery East Pipeline fatefartherin doubt
London Free Press - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Dan Healing

Ad Value:$3,717
Reach: 70995 Page: N7
Doubts are growing over the fate of the Energy East Pipeline after members of the National Energy Board panel examining the project resigned, leaving questions over

howthe reviewwill proceed. Analyst Dirk Lever of ...

[The Globe and Mail]
Pipeline delays pose threat to firms' credit ratings
The Globe and Mail - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:JEFFREY JONES

Ad Value:$14,000
Reach: 309154 Page: B5
Ceaseless delays in building pipelines now threaten credit ratings in Canada's energy transportation sector. New complications to old debates in recent days have added to already great uncertainty about the industry's ability to get oil ...

[The Globe and Mail]
Court rejects First Nation's claim that rights were violated in NEB review
The Globe and Mail - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:SHAWN McCARTHY

Ad Value:$10,437
Reach: 309154 Page: B5
The Federal Court of Appeal has rejected a challenge by a Vancouver-area First Nation, which argued its rights were violated by the National Energy Board during the agency's review of Kinder Morgan Inc.'s Trans Mountain expansion project. ...

[National Post]
Clouds gather over Energy East pipeline development; Political Pressure
National Post - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Dan Healing

Ad Value:$3,432
Reach: 159480 Page: FP2
Doubts are growing over the fate of the Energy East Pipeline after members of the National Energy Board panel examining the project resigned, leaving questions over how the review will proceed. Analyst Dirk Lever of ...

[Toronto Star]
The outlook looks bleak for divisive Energy East; Chances that pipeline will be built fell after panel resigned last week, CIBC analyst says
Toronto Star - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:The Canadian Press

Ad Value:$17,453
Reach: 361323 Page: B6
A bank analyst says the chance that the Energy East pipeline project will be built has fallen to 25 per cent from 33 per cent after members of a regulatory panel were forced to resign last week. CIBC analyst Robert Hope said ...

[thestar.com]
A political doubleheader unfolding in two Montreal courtrooms: Hébert
thestar.com - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Chantal Hébert(
https://author.thestar.com/»<https://author.thestar.com/content/thestar/authors.h_bert_chantal.html>)
Reach: 999000
MONTREAL-For political junkies, a compelling double program is unfolding in Montreal courts this week. In one courtroom, the sponsorship scandal is coming back to life, and in another Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's undertaking of a new partnership ...

[InsideTorontocom]
Clouds of uncertainty gather around Energy East
InsideTorontocom - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
CALGARY - Doubts are growing over the fate of the Energy East Pipeline after members of the National Energy Board panel examining the project resigned, leaving questions over how the review will proceed. Analyst ...

[www.nationalobserver.com]
After Dakota pipeline battle, Indigenous people say they share "unprecedented unity" | National Observer<http://www.nationalobserver.com/2016/09/12/news/after-dakota-pipeline-battle-indigenous-people-say-they-share-unprecedented-unity>
www.nationalobserver.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://www.nationalobserver.com/2016/09/12/news/after-dakota-pipeline-battle-indigenous-people-say-they-share-unprecedented-unity>
For Indigenous activists fighting pipelines across Canada, the following names are unforgettable: Energy East, Enbridge Northern Gateway, the Trans Mountain expansion.

[edmontonjournal.com]
Graham Thomson: Energy East pipeline review delayed? Blame Harper | Edmonton Journal<http://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/graham-thomson-energy-east-pipeline-review-delayed-blame-harper>
edmontonjournal.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://edmontonjournal.com/news/politics/graham-thomson-energy-east-pipeline-review-delayed-blame-harper>
To listen to experts today, you'd get the impression the Energy East pipeline project is pretty much buried — but not in the way proponents want the pipeline buried, if you know what I mean.

[blackburnnews.com]
BlackburnNews.com - Bruce Power Produces Low Cost Electricity<http://blackburnnews.com/midwestern-ontario/midwestern-ontario-news/2016/09/12/bruce-power-produces-low-cost-electricity/>
blackburnnews.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://blackburnnews.com/midwestern-ontario/midwestern-ontario-

news/2016/09/12/bruce-power-produces-low-cost-electricity/>
Bruce Power says they continue to produce one of the lowest cost sources of clean electricity in Ontario.

[business.financialpost.com]
How the Trudeau government can stop the ‘Keystoning’ of Energy East … if it really wants to | Financial Post<http://business.financialpost.com/fp-comment/how-the-trudeau-government-can-stop-the-keystoning-of-energy-east-if-it-really-wants-to>
business.financialpost.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://business.financialpost.com/fp-comment/how-the-trudeau-government-can-stop-the-keystoning-of-energy-east-if-it-really-wants-to>
Is the National Energy Board review of the Energy East pipeline process broken, after three panel members resigned last week? Not in the least. But getting us all to believe that it’s broken is part of the eco-activist strategy known as ...

[www.ctvnews.ca]
Uncertainty growing around Energy East Pipeline development | CTV News<http://www.ctvnews.ca/business/uncertainty-growing-around-energy-east-pipeline-development-1.3068461>
www.ctvnews.ca - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://www.ctvnews.ca/business/uncertainty-growing-around-energy-east-pipeline-development-1.3068461>
Doubts are growing over the fate of the Energy East Pipeline after members of the National Energy Board panel examining the project resigned, leaving questions over how the review will proceed.

[edmontonjournal.com]
Canada needs new energy pipelines, bond rating agency says | Edmonton Journal<http://edmontonjournal.com/business/energy/canada-needs-new-energy-pipelines-bond-rating-agency-says>
edmontonjournal.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://edmontonjournal.com/business/energy/canada-needs-new-energy-pipelines-bond-rating-agency-says>
Canadian energy will remain landlocked and the industry will lose potential overseas customers if the country doesn’t build new pipelines, says a new DBRS report.

[www.brandonsun.com]
Clouds of uncertainty gather around Energy East Pipeline development - Brandon Sun<http://www.brandonsun.com/national/breaking-news/energy-east-pipelines-chances-of-being-built-doubted-after-panel-quits-393126031.html?thx=y>
www.brandonsun.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://www.brandonsun.com/national/breaking-news/energy-east-pipelines-chances-of-being-built-doubted-after-panel-quits-393126031.html?thx=y>
A bank analyst says the chance that the Energy East Pipeline project will be built has fallen to 25 per cent from 33 per cent after members of a regulatory panel were forced to resign last week.

[www.huffingtonpost.ca]
Energy East Pipeline's Odds Of Being Built Now Very Slim: CIBC<http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2016/09/12/energy-east-pipeline-odds-cibc_n_11976750.html>
www.huffingtonpost.ca - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2016/09/12/energy-east-pipeline-odds-cibc_n_11976750.html>
A bank analyst says the chance that the Energy East pipeline project will be built has fallen to 25 per cent from 33 per cent after members of a regulatory panel were forced to resign last week.

[theglobeandmail.com]
Court rejects First Nations claim rights were violated during TransMountain review; Federal Court of Appeal declared that the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation of Burnaby had numerous opportunities to engage in the process
theglobeandmail.com - Mon Sep 12 2016, 1:16pm ET
Tone: Negative
Byline:Shawn McCarthy
Reach: 1188000
The Federal Court of Appeal has rejected a challenge by a Vancouver-area First Nation, which argued its rights were violated by the National Energy Board during the agency's review of Kinder Morgan Inc.'s TransMountain expansion project. In the ...

[www.bnn.ca]
TransCanada's Energy East could be doomed as delays pile up, says analyst - Article - BNN<http://www.bnn.ca/transcanada-s-energy-east-could-be-doomed-as-delays-pile-up-says-analyst-1.565364>
www.bnn.ca - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://www.bnn.ca/transcanada-s-energy-east-could-be-doomed-as-delays-pile-up-says-analyst-1.565364>
COMMODITIES 2h ago TransCanada's Energy East could be doomed as delays pile up, says analyst John Gray, Producer, BNN Pipeline , The Canadian Press The recent shakeup at the National Energy Board's panel examining TransCanada's ...

[www.mcgilldaily.com]
Demonstrators protest Dakota pipeline outside U.S. consulate – The McGill Daily<http://www.mcgilldaily.com/2016/09/demonstrators-protest-dakota-pipeline-outside-u-s-consulate/>
www.mcgilldaily.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://www.mcgilldaily.com/2016/09/demonstrators-protest-dakota-pipeline-outside-u-s-consulate/>
Paul Crawford noted on Monday, September 12, 2016
Energy East is mentioned.
On the morning of Thursday September 8, a crowd of roughly thirty people gathered outside the American consulate in Montreal to protest the controversial Dakota Access Pipeline project. Chanting "Water is life!" and "Leave it in the ...

[www.energyglobal.com]
NEB makes Energy East and Eastern Mainline decisions<http://www.energyglobal.com/pipelines/business-news/12092016/NEB-makes-Energy-East-and-Eastern-Mainline-decisions/>
www.energyglobal.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Permalink<http://www.energyglobal.com/pipelines/business-news/12092016/NEB-makes-Energy-East-and-Eastern-Mainline-decisions/>
The National Energy Board (NEB) has issued two decisions to address motions before a panel that are hearing the Energy East and Eastern Mainline Project applications.

[Shoreline Beacon]
When will promised wind turbine audio tests be conducted ?
Shoreline Beacon - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Greg Schmalz

Ad Value:$224
Reach: 3769 Page: A8
This letter was sent to provincial officials and shared with the Shoreline Beacon by S. T. O. P (Saugeen Turbine Operation Policy .) Letter : It's September and no notice has been given to key property owners surrounding the Port Elgin ...

[Kingston Whig-Standard]
Wind opponents file appeal
Kingston Whig-Standard - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Positive
Byline:Elliot Ferguson

Ad Value:$506
Reach: 21850 Page: A3
The group fighting a proposed wind energy project on Amherst Island has appealed to the federal environment minister to intervene in the case. In a letter to Catherine McKenna, the federal environment and climate ...

Clippings Summary

Full Articles
[The Globe and Mail]
Liberals unveil hydro subsidy as Wynne begins pivot to election
The Globe and Mail - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:ADRIAN MORROW

Ad Value:$16,093
Reach: 309154 Page: A1
The Ontario Liberals are bringing in a new 8-per-cent subsidy for residential electricity bills - less than a year after ending a 10-percent subsidy - in a bid to cool voter anger over one of the province's most persistent pocketbook issues.

The move, which will cost the treasury an estimated $1-billion annually, marks an abrupt pivot toward everyday concerns for Premier Kathleen Wynne as she begins planning a long arc toward her re-election campaign in 20 months' time.

The subsidy is equal to the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax, and the government is branding it as an HST rebate. The reduction will automatically be taken off consumers' bills, with a line reminding them of the discount.

It is almost identical to the Ontario Clean Energy Benefit, a 10-per-cent rebate the Liberals started in 2011 to ease the higher cost of green electricity contracts, and which expired at the start of this year. That benefit was criticized for disproportionately rewarding rich people who consume a lot of electricity, and for discouraging conservation by subsidizing energy use with tax dollars and debt.

The government's scramble to revive the policy under different branding signals just how badly the Liberals want to reverse their flagging poll numbers. So eager were the Liberals to highlight some good news that Ms. Wynne called in Lieutenant-Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell to prorogue the legislature and read a Speech from the Throne on Monday.

"You continue to face electricity-cost increases above the level of inflation," Ms. Dowdeswell said in the noon address, as hundreds of corporate and union leaders packed the public galleries and the floor of the legislature. "Whether in Kenora, Sudbury, Belleville, London or Barrie, your government has listened to and has heard your concerns. It recognizes that the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets."

The speech also pledged to create 100,000 more child-care spaces over five years, at a cost of up to $3.75-billion; to create new training programs for workers; to improve home care; and to cut waiting times for patients to see specialists.

The pledges appear to be a bid to win back disaffected voters by framing the government's agenda in day-to-day terms.

The hydro subsidy will kick in Jan. 1, 2017. It will apply to houses, farms and small businesses. The government estimates the discount would save a typical household $130 a year.

Rural residents will also receive an additional discount of roughly 20 per cent, while industrial businesses will get more incentives to shift their electricity use to off-peak times, such as late at night, to save money. The increased savings for rural residents will be subsidized by other hydro ratepayers, who will have to pay extra to cover an annual cost of $285-million.

A combination of factors - including long-term contracts that guarantee a single rate of return to private power producers, the cost of repairing aging infrastructure such as nuclear reactors and transmission lines, and falling demand - have driven up rates in recent years. Not only is the expensive power an irritant for voters, it also deters businesses when they consider setting up shop in Ontario.

Hydro rates have proven a potent issue for the opposition parties, which hammered the government over prices in the Sept. 1 Scarborough-Rouge River by-election. A Liberal seat since 1999, it fell to the Progressive Conservatives.

"It's clear that the problems of everyday Ontarians are never a problem until it's Premier Wynne's problem," Tory Leader Patrick Brown said. "This is merely a Band-Aid solution."

NDP Leader Andrea Horwath pointed out that the program will not actually remove the provincial portion of HST from bills, but only rebate it, meaning the Liberals could cancel the program at any time.

"That raises a lot of questions about how long this rebate is going to last," she said. "My message is: Just take the HST off hydro already, once and for all."

A government source said taking the provincial portion of the HST off would involve lengthy negotiations with the federal government, so the Liberals decided instead to structure the move as a subsidy so they could roll it out faster.

Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault would not directly address any criticisms of the subsidy.
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[Toronto Star]
Liberal's hydro hack a quick political fix
Toronto Star - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Martin Regg Cohn

Ad Value:$14,017
Reach: 361323 Page: A14
The 2018 Ontario election is underway today, two years early.

The first campaign announcement: Hydro bills will be reduced 8 per cent by January as an HST rebate, just in time for a positive pre-election impression.

It's a sop to those who hate the HST. And a victory for opposition politicians who have long goaded the government to cut taxes.

Which is precisely what this latest (and recurring) giveaway is. A tax cut - not a hydro rebate.

Pocketbook politics is back. And everything old is new again, courtesy of Monday's speech from the throne laying out the government's new (old) agenda - more of a reprise than a reset.

The Liberals have been down this path in the past, just before hitting the campaign trail in 2011. With hydro bills rising inexorably and the opposition clamouring for tax relief, the government dreamed up the "10-per-cent-off!" Ontario Clean Energy Benefit in 2010.

Environmentalists and economists urged the Liberals to wean themselves from such shameless givebacks. And after profiting from two election victories, the Liberals let it lapse last year - mindful of their desperate fiscal straits.

Now, in desperate political straits, the Liberals have revived it.

Everyone knew it made for good politics but poor policy: Not only bad for cash flow, but bad for carbon flow because it reimbursed people for energy consumption, diminishing the disincentive of price signals.

It's a quick and dirty fix, not an enduring solution. If hydro costs are too high, try reducing subsidies for (renewable energy) producers upstream - not introducing subsidies for consumers downstream.

But everyone loves a tax cut. Even a pretend one.

Like Leon's, the Liberals are touting a tax holiday anew. Their rebate corresponds to the 8-percentage-point provincial portion of the 13-per-cent HST (the other 5 percentage points are Ottawa's business), averaging $130 a year per household.

The Progressive Conservatives proffered an HST exemption in the 2011 election campaign, but had second thoughts about their gimmick and dropped it in the 2014 campaign. Now, PC Leader Patrick Brown is all for it.

The New Democrats first dreamed up the so-called HST holiday in 2010, sounding like old-time Tory tax cutters. Even when the PCs abandoned it, NDP Leader Andrea Horwath re-offered her idea this summer and now gets bragging rights for forcing the government's hand - if piling on debt merits credit.

As shell games go, it's awfully hard to follow. A frequent criticism of the old 10-per-cent Clean Energy Benefit was that it merely transferred the burden of electricity costs from hydro ratepayers to taxpayers at large (it was described as transitional relief for the heavy expense of ridding Ontario of coal-fired power).

Now it's getting even sillier. The new measure is being sold as tax relief, but remember that the HST on hydro doesn't actually go into the coffers of local electricity companies, but is remitted to the provincial treasury. Conceptually, that means ratepayers aren't really getting relief from their hydro bills, just the tax they pay on hydro.

In that sense, it's a shell game within a shell game. The treasury is bankrolling this tax cut, so we'll ultimately be making it up through other income and other provincial taxes.

The Liberals giveth with one hand and taketh with the other.

Thanks to a steady economic recovery - Ontario's growth exceeded that of the U.S. earlier this year, and our unemployment rate is at an eight-year low - tax revenues are surging rapidly enough to cover this new hydro subsidy while still balancing the budget. But it's still a shell game, any way you subsidize it.

Far better for the government to address the realities of rising electricity rates, rather than proffering pretend tax breaks.

The same can be said for the opposition, who focus mostly on HST cuts and stopping the privatization of Hydro One, neither of which are remotely related to the underlying costs of generating power (and the ultimate price set by our independent regulator).

Stripped of its lofty pretensions, the latest manoeuvre is about digging the Liberals out of a political hole - by digging a trench against opposition attacks and laying the groundwork for the campaign trail. All at our expense, any way you cut it.

Martin Regg Cohn's political column appears Tuesday, Thursday and

Saturday. mcohn@thestar.ca,

Twitter: @reggcohn
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[Toronto Star]
Hold the politicking; Throne speech
Toronto Star - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Positive
Ad Value:$14,666
Reach: 361323 Page: A12
There was some good news and some good old-fashioned politicking in the throne speech that Ontario's Liberal government hopes will carry it through to the next election scheduled for 2018.

The good news comes in the form of an announcement that the province will create 100,000 new licensed child-care spaces over the next five years, a badly needed initiative that will have long-term benefits for children and families.

The government estimates the operating costs for expanding child care at between $600 million and $750 million, plus considerably more for start-up costs. It's a big number, but it's a big need, as well.

Ontario has licensed care spaces for only a fifth of its young children. Families are forced to join long wait-lists to get their kids into decent care and pay a big chunk of their income once they find it. The lack of affordable, reliable child care has even been identified as one of the principal causes of the stubborn pay gap between men and women.

The government expanded child care by 56,000 spaces over the past three years, so the new goal indicates it is significantly stepping up its efforts in this vital area. That's all to the good, and it should have a big payoff down the line in well-being for children, young families and society as a whole.

Politics being politics, though, this important initiative is being overshadowed by another, less-welcome move. Faced with anger about rising electricity bills, the government is throwing a billion dollars at consumers to ease their pain.

It will do that starting next Jan. 1 by rebating the provincial portion of the HST on electricity bills for homes and small businesses. In effect, it will cut bills by 8 per cent.

Consumers, no doubt, will cheer. On average, says the government, it will save households $130 a year - more for rural homeowners who can't use cheap natural gas and whose bills have been rising even more than most. They stand to gain about another $540 a year.

There's no doubt some power users have been hurting. But it's worth remembering the province already has a program to help low-income people with their electricity bills. The new measures are a straight giveaway designed to make everyone feel a bit better - or at least a little less bad - about what they're spending to heat and cool their home. And, presumably, a little less ticked off at the government that oversees the province's energy system.

The government insists it can afford to do this and still meet its long-standing target of balancing the provincial budget by 2017-18. It's already done the financial "heavy lifting" needed to meet both goals, it says.

But beyond the obvious political calculations, the question that must be asked is this: If the government has an extra billion dollars to spend, is this really the best use for it?

No one likes to pay electricity bills, especially when they keep rising faster than inflation. But as the Liberals themselves have explained repeatedly over the years, there are very good reasons why we're paying more for power.

Previous governments, of all political parties, ran down the province's energy system for years. They refused to invest in the grid and kept energy prices artificially low. Now, we're paying more realistic prices and we're benefiting from the Liberals' gutsy decision to do away with cheap, but dirty coal-generated power.

That alone, as the government noted in Monday's throne speech, has brought huge savings in health and environmental benefits. For one, summer "smog days" are now a thing of the past.

And even with the considerable rise in Ontario's home energy costs, we're still pretty much middle-of-the-pack when it comes to how much we pay. Bills are lower in Quebec and Manitoba, which have a lot of cheap hydro power, but considerably higher in the Atlantic region and Alberta. Higher prices for power are a reality all over - and any political party that says different isn't levelling with consumers.

In that light, spending a cool billion to trim home energy costs by 8 per cent for a lot of consumers who don't actually need the savings is hard to justify. It won't make the system better in the long run; it won't encourage conservation; and it won't target the money to those who are hurting the most.

It's understandable why the government has chosen the path of assuaging consumers. But the truth is that higher energy bills are with us for a long time to come - regardless of who is writing the throne speech.
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[Toronto Star]
Hydro bill rebate and other highlights from throne speech
Toronto Star - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral

Byline:Rob Ferguson

Ad Value:$2,949
Reach: 361323 Page: A14
Hydro HST rebate

Eight-per-cent rebate, equivalent to the provincial portion of the 13-per-cent HST, on electricity bills starting in January.

Rural hydro rebate

Rebates of about 20 per cent on hydro bills for eligible residents of rural areas where electric heating is more prevalent.

Big hydro user savings

Expansion of the Industrial Conservation Initiative to help about 1,000 more large electricity users cut their bills by as much as 34 per cent by shifting hydro use away from peak periods.

More child care

100,000 new licensed child-care spaces over five years starting in 2017, creating spots for about 40 per cent of children up to age 4.

More math teachers

More math "lead" teachers in elementary schools to boost declining test scores.
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[thestar.com]
Wynne announces 8 per cent HST cut from hydro bills in throne speech
thestar.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Robert Benzie(
https://author.thestar.com/»<https://author.thestar.com/content/thestar/authors.benzie_rob.html>)Rob Ferguson(
https://author.thestar.com/»<https://author.thestar.com/content/thestar/authors.ferguson_rob.html>)
Reach: 999000
Electricity ratepayers will no longer be charged the 8-per-cent provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax on their hydro bills, Premier Kathleen Wynne's government has announced.

In a bid to jolt their flagging popularity (www.thestar.com<https://www.thestar.com/news/queenspark/2016/08/19/ontario-tories-hold-steady-lead-in-latest-poll.html>) , Wynne's Liberals delivered a consumer-friendly speech from the throne Monday that also promised 100,000 new child-care spaces over the next five years.

"Whether in Kenora, Sudbury, Belleville, London, or Barrie, your government has listened to and has heard your concerns," said the speech, which was read in the Legislature by Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell.

"It recognizes that the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets," the speech continued.

Eliminating the 8-per-cent provincial share of the 13-per-cent HST as of Jan. 1 will save the average household $130 a year.

Many rural ratepayers, who cannot take advantage of the inexpensive natural gas for heating that urban Ontarians can, will receive an additional $540 annually.

While that rebate will cost the treasury about $1 billion a year, the Liberals insist they are on track to balance the books in the 2017-18 budget expected for March.

"Ontario's economy is still in transition, but our recovery is firmly track," Wynne (www.thestar.com<https://www.thestar.com/news/queenspark/2016/09/11/premier-hitting-government-reload-button.html>) said in a statement.

"While many are benefitting from the growth we've achieved, others have yet to share in Ontario's resurgence," the premier said.

The Liberals, who will mark their 13th anniversary in power next month, are smarting from the loss (www.thestar.com<https://www.thestar.com/news/queenspark/2016/09/01/patrick-browns-sex-ed-snafu-dominates-scarborough-byelection.html>) of the Scarborough-Rouge River byelection to the Progressive Conservatives on Sept. 1.

Mindful that Ontarians head to the polls in spring 2018, Wynne (www.thestar.com<https://www.thestar.com/news/queenspark/2016/09/07/wynne-signals-hydro-relief-is-coming-for-consumers.html>) is desperate to give her majority Grits a reboot.

"Our government understands the challenges people face and shares their concerns," she said, vowing to deliver "real benefits and more inclusive growth that will help more people in their everyday lives."

That "everyday" theme permeated nearly every one of the throne speech's 17 pages.

"With economic growth and a balanced budget, your government will continue to build Ontario up, investing in the things that matter most to you and that help in your everyday life," said the address, entitled "A Balanced Plan to Build Ontario Up for Everyone."

"It will do that, first, by enhancing child care."

Building upon the 56,000 new daycare spaces in the past three years, the Liberals will fund an additional 100,000 over the next five.

"Your government will also make it easier for parents to find and use the services their children need, whether they are before-and-after school programs, drop-in centres or more licensed child care spaces."

When the government announced it would ban day care wait list fees that range from $20 to $200 as of Sept. 1, child-care activists said Wynne needed to create more spaces so new parents wouldn't face a mad scramble to find spots for their kids.

Competition for spaces is tight, particularly in Toronto, where there are spots for just 21 per cent of children under the age of 5. Ontario now spends more than $1 billion a year on 350,000 licensed day care spaces.

Stinging over the recent Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) tests that found half of Ontario's Grade 6 students failed to meet the provincial mathematics standard this year, the government plans to emphasize math skills.

"To help students improve their mathematics skills, your government is implementing a renewed math strategy, including having up to three math lead teachers in all elementary schools."

The falling EQAO scores - 58 per cent of Grade Six students met the standard in 2012 - has been blamed on kids' anxiety over math and teachers' lack of proficiency in the subject.

Beyond math, the government is "also setting a goal for every young person to have at least one opportunity for experiential learning."

Pocketbook issues such as hydro and daycare dominated the speech.

The Liberals remain committed to selling the Hydro One transmission utility to bankroll public transit and roads and bridges.

The government's carbon-pricing scheme to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change, which will cost the average household $13 extra a month starting in January, is still on track.

Progressive Conservative Leader Patrick Brown, who attended Tory MPP Raymond Cho's swearing-in earlier Monday, and NDP Leader Andrea Horwath will offer their critiques of the government's plan later in the afternoon.

Both have been urging the Liberals to tackle soaring hydro prices; Horwath (www.thestar.com<https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2010/09/27/scrap_hst_on_hydro_bills_ndp_urges.html>) has been pushing for the scrapping of the HST from bills since 2010.

Ontario Public Service Employees' Union president Warren (Smokey) Thomas didn't wait to hear the speech to blast it; he said in a news release that Wynne's government needs "the boot, not a reboot."

"After two years of lurching from mistake to mistake, the Liberals don't need to 'refresh their brand.' They need to call an election," said Thomas.

"Kathleen Wynne's sudden interest in the needs of everyday Ontarians is all about her political survival, nothing more."

All government legislation on the order paper when the House was prorogued Thursday will be reintroduced, starting on Tuesday.

The first bill will be the campaign finance reform law sparked by a Toronto Star series last March.

Under the legislation, corporate and union donations to political parties will be banned, MPPs and candidates will be forbidden from attending party fundraisers, and contribution limits will be reduced to $1,200 from $9,975.

The new law will introduce public subsidies of the major political parties by giving them $2.71 for every vote they received in the 2014 election.

Starting in January, annual payments will be $5.06 million for the Liberals, $4.09 million for the Conservatives, $3.1 million for the New Democrats, and $630,000 for the Greens.
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[thestar.com]
Five highlights from Kathleen Wynne's throne speech
thestar.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:Rob Ferguson(
https://author.thestar.com/»<https://author.thestar.com/content/thestar/authors.ferguson_rob.html>)
Reach: 999000
Highlights of Monday's throne speech:

Hydro HST rebate

8 per cent rebate, equivalent to the provincial portion of the 13 per cent HST, on electricity bills starting in January.

Rural hydro rebate

Rebates of about 20 per cent on hydro bills for eligible residents of rural areas where electric heating is more prevalent.

Big hydro user savings

Expansion of the Industrial Conservation Initiative to help about 1,000 more large electricity users cut their bills by as much as 34 per cent by shifting hydro use away from peak periods.

More child care

100,000 new licensed child care spaces over five years starting in 2017, creating spots for about 40 per cent of children up to age 4.

More math teachers

More math "lead" teachers in elementary schools to boost declining test scores.

MORE ON THESTAR.COM

Wynne announces 8 per cent HST cut in throne speech
(www.thestar.com<https://www.thestar.com/news/queenspark/2016/09/12/wynne-announces-8-per-cent-hst-cut-from-hydro-bills-in-throne-speech.html>)
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[The Globe and Mail]
Wynne's way: Rob the poor, help the rich; As the big thinkers at Queen's Park bask in air-conditioned bliss, more and more folks are struggling to pay their bills
The Globe and Mail - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:MARGARET WENTE

Ad Value:$18,218
Reach: 309154 Page: A13
Out in rural Ontario, far away from the lush grounds of Queen's Park, a crisis is brewing.

Electricity rates have soared so high that many people can't afford to pay their hydro bills.

Local charities have a name for it: energy poverty. The problem is so bad that they've set up relief funds to help protect families from the threat of disconnection.

No wonder Kathleen Wynne, Ontario's Premier, is running for cover. The Liberal government's energy policy has been a disaster for lower-income citizens, especially in rural areas, where delivery charges are significantly higher. Many rural households now face hydro bills of $400 or $500 a month - double what they were 10 years ago. As the big thinkers in Toronto bask in air-conditioned bliss, more and more folks are struggling to cover both the hydro bill and food.

"People have become obsessive," says Francesca Dobbyn, who is head of the United Way for Bruce and Grey Counties.

"They're sitting in the dark.

They're walling off part of their homes. They're unplugging the stove, the kitchen clock, the microwave." Sadly, utility providers (which disconnected 60,000 customers last year) aren't especially sympathetic. "They told one woman to tell her kids to stop playing Xbox."

With sky-high hydro rates and other political calamities on her plate, Ms. Wynne desperately needs to jolt her government's approval ratings back to life before the next election. On Monday, she promised to axe the provincial-sales tax on electricity for everyone. She also promised to cut rural rates by making urban customers pick up some of the higher delivery costs. Ms. Dobbyn says it's a "great start."

Whether it's a long-term solution to our energy woes is another matter. Ontario's energy poverty afflicts the whole economy, not just the poor. This poverty is largely policy-induced - the consequence of megalomaniacal green schemes that have transferred billions of dollars from taxpayers to purveyors of wind towers and solar panels.

Even as the costs of solar plummeted, the prices paid to contractors did not. Lucky players got rich quick.

Meanwhile, partly because of conservation, electricity demand has fallen over the past decade.

Ontario now produces vastly more power than it needs, or will need for many years. That hasn't curbed the government's enthusiasm for plunging even deeper into wind and solar.

Today we're paying big bucks to generate power we will never use, and paying again for the United States to take it off our hands.

The irony of such reckless mismanagement is exquisite.

Because the overall costs of the system are largely fixed, lower electricity use won't drive down rates. In fact, the less hydro we use, the more expensive per unit it gets. Wash your clothes at midnight if you want, but the cost of hydro is going to go up anyway.

Saving the sales tax will be nice, of course. But the government still has to pay for all those hospitals and schools, so it's going to have to get that money from somewhere else. As any economist will tell you, acrossthe-board cuts (subsidies) to energy costs are always a sop to the rich, since the well-off consume a greater share of power to run their 4,000 square-foot McMansions. This plan is expected to drain $1-billion from provincial coffers. It's a shell game they're playing. It's still your pocket that's being picked.

The Wynne government loves to bask in the virtues of "sustainable" energy. But its deranged pursuit of green energy at any cost - dating back to the days when Gerald Butts, Justin Trudeau's BFF, was cutting his teeth at Queen's Park - is not economically sustainable at all. Electricity prices in Ontario are rising faster than anywhere else in North America.

Many experts, including Bank of Montreal chief economist Doug Porter, warn that soaring hydro rates are among the biggest threats to the provincial economy. "Let's just say it is going to do very serious harm to the Ontario economy if we continue to see double-digit increases in electricity rates," he told Global TV.

At least there is a certain transparency to hydro rates. But soon, the Wynne government will introduce cap and trade in an attempt to lower carbon emissions. Cap and trade will be a black hole where all light vanishes and the real costs are unknown. As the sweltering masses switch off their fans in hopes of saving money, the progressive policy engineers at Queen's Park will be patting each other on the back once again.

They've never met the masses.

But they're sure they know what's good for them.

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[Ottawa Sun]
Throne speech all smoke and mirrors
Ottawa Sun - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Jerry Agar

Ad Value:$1,050
Reach: 45442 Page: A17
The Ontario Liberals took a step toward clinging to power Monday by fiddling with the power - again In Premier Kathleen Wynne's throne speech, the government said it plans to remove the provincial portion of the HST from hydro bills.This because Wynne finally "gets it" that people are angry about electricity costs.

This 8% rebate was announced in the speech read by Lt.-Gov. Elizabeth Dowdeswell.

The average household will see $130 in savings annually.

Rural ratepayers will receive an additional 20% break, which would result in an additional $45 a month saving, or $540 a year.

Sound good? Of course. Who doesn't want a saving?

But will you really save money in the long run?

The speech was loaded with many ways the government plans to spend more of our money on new day care spaces, math teachers and promises to seniors, university students and aboriginals. How will the Liberals pay for all of that and balance the budget, as they insist they will, by 2017/2018?

It is easy to be cynical with this government after they tried so hard to hide the true cost of canceling power plants prior to the 2011 election, and now stand accused of improperly deleting the email record of what they did and who did it.

What is the true cost of lowering the tax on power bills?

Parker Gallant, VP of Wind Concerns Ontario and a former banker, believes rates will be increased in some way to make up the difference.

As he put it: "The implications of the proposed changes in the electricity file coming from the Throne speech appear to have the reverse effect on residential ratepayers. Rates will rise! Those who don't qualify for the Ontario Electricity Support

Program will be forced to absorb higher costs from the additional funds allocated to OESP recipients and the funds (unknown) destined for the revised Class A ratepayers. Until the latter has been clarified it is difficult to estimate how much this will drive up rates! This looks to be another action that the Auditor General would suggest could have benefited from a cost/benefit analysis."

It is possible the government will transfer funds from its planned cap-andtrade program to make up for the loss in tax revenue, but the carbon market Ontario is about to enter recently crashed.

Meanwhile we' re to believe the government has already saved us billions in energy costs.

We were told that removing dirty coal-fired generation from our electricity system created, "savings of more than $4 billion a year in health and other costs associated with smog and pollution from coal-fired generation."

We were told the government "renegotiated" its Green Energy Investment Agreement to reduce contract costs by $3.7 billion and created a new Large Renewable Procurement process, which saved another "$4.1 billion as compared to previous forecasts."

So that is almost $12 billion saved?

That is amazing considering that Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk reported last year that Ontario consumers paid $37 billion more than necessary on their hydro bills from 2006 to 2014.

Imagine how much worse it could have been. And despite all the "savings" we are now $300 billion in debt.

Does paying less tax on a higher price improve the household budget?

Or maybe it is all smoke (from a natural gas plant of course, not coal) and mirrors.

Agar hosts the 9 a.m. to noon show on NEWSTALK1010
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[Ottawa Sun]
'Solving' the problems; Take with one hand, give with the other
Ottawa Sun - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Christina Blizzard

Ad Value:$1,664
Reach: 45442 Page: A4
How clever Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals are.

They create expensive problems that hurt low and middle-income folk the most. Then they miraculously ride to the rescue - with even more costly fixes to the problems they created in the first place. In the throne speech delivered by Lt.-Gov. Elizabeth Dowdeswell Monday, the Wynne government outlined its way forward. The key is their pledge to remove the 8% provincial portion of the HST from your electricity bill.

So having created two problems - soaring hydro rates and the HST - they're now going to remedy those problems with their own half-baked remedies.

Why are hydro rates so high? Because the Liberals brought in their costly Green Energy

Act and added a massive bureaucracy and an alphabet soup of agencies staffed with Liberal hacks.

They pushed the cost of electricity into the stratosphere

with their wacky schemes and cosy deals. And apparently Wynne was the only person who didn't know the havoc they were wreaking.

Here I was writing column after column about seniors living on fixed incomes who were being driven into hydro poverty by the Liberals' cockamamie schemes - and no one in government noticed.

In a crafty sleight of hand, in 2014 they announced with great fanfare the removal of the Debt Reduction Charge, effective Dec. 31, 2015. What they quietly slid under the mat was that they were dropping the so-called Clean Energy Benefit that gave you a 10% rebate on the first 3,000 kilowatts of electricity.

They thought we were too dumb to notice. Except voters in Scarborough Rouge-River finally screamed loud

enough in the recent bylection to wake up Rip Van Wynne and the rest of her Liberal trained seals.

We have a problem. We can't pay our bills. They didn't notice because they live in the Queen's Park bubble. They're cushioned from these exorbitant costs by fat-cat salaries. Ditto their friends in the civil service and public sector unions.

Finally, the shell game they played backfired. Nothing could hide the gouging on our bills.

So how are they going to pay for this so-called "relief"? Liberals claim in the throne speech that they'll balance their budget. They could be counting on money from their next major boondoggle - capand-trade. But those revenues are iffy. We're already looking at a $315-billion deficit.

So will they sell off another asset? After Hydro One, what's for sale next?

And who'll get the biggest boost from this tax break? Not the struggling seniors, trying to hang on to their homes. The wealthy few with their air conditioning and their pool heaters and their plug-in electric cars.

It's taxpayers subsidizing ratepayers. Meanwhile, the Liberals are pushing full-steam ahead

with amendments to elections financing legislation that will ban MPPs from attending any fundraising event. Nonsense! An out-of-control, arrogant government is now seeking to entrench its power instead of dealing with their own mess - the cash-for-access scandal. Small-town corn roasts aren't the problem. Big ticket receptions where folk pay big bucks to hob-nob with cabinet ministers are.

Dowdeswell has the power to say enough's enough. This government has no moral authority to govern. We can't afford another two years of them wrecking this province with their nutty schemes and massive, out-of-control spending.

Dowdeswell should step in and dismiss the government. It's her privilege - and our very own recall legislation.

Everyone from the auditor to the ombudsman to the financial accountability officer has called them out.

It's time for them to go.

We don't need a throne speech to reset the legislature.

We need an election.

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[National Post]
Ontario and its mea culpa
National Post - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Ad Value:$7,915
Reach: 159480 Page: A7
Ontario's nearly 13-year-old Liberal government announced a slate of new, purportedly consumer-friendly initiatives Monday. In her speech from the throne, the lieutenant-governor said Premier Kathleen Wynne's government would create 100,000 child-care spaces, and drop the provincial share of the harmonized goods and sales tax from home hydro bills. There would also be targeted incentives aimed at lowering the punishing hydro bills paid by manufacturers - there are still some left, amazingly - and rural residents.

The throne speech, which followed the Liberals' recent byelection loss of a Toronto riding to the Progressive Conservatives, is clearly aimed at addressing the discontent many Ontarians feel with their government, particularly over basic pocketbook issues. The tone of the speech, on the whole, had a "we-feel-your-pain" vibe. It's the government, after all. And it's here to help.

The problem with this Liberal government, though, is how much time it spends fixing problems it created. The hydro file is the clearest example. Under premier Dalton McGuinty, it set out to turn Ontario into a green energy superpower. To do this, it offered virtually unbreakable long-term contracts at prices well above market rates, with the high cost justified by the need to convince Ontarians to take a chance on the new-fangled, expensive technology. The province did succeed in producing plenty of green power, which enabled it to phase out all coal-powered generation.

That's super. Green energy is lovely; coal is dirty. Cue birdsong and clear, blue skies. The problem, though, is that demand for electricity, thanks to a number of factors, including the province's manufacturing decline, has left Ontario with more power than it needs. The long-term contracts require Ontario to buy the green power at a premium price anyway, only to dump it, often at a loss, into the grids of neighbours, such as New York and Pennsylvania. The cost of this debacle, combined with squadrons of windmills marching across rural areas producing even more unneeded power, and money spent on (necessary) upgrades to the antiquated transmission grid, has been borne by ratepayers, whose bills seem to increase with the regularity of the changing seasons.

Even while acknowledging the pain felt by many Ontarians, and announcing the HST rebate, the government made a point of defending its policies. It boasted of having saved taxpayers billions through the renegotiation of some long-term contracts it had signed, essentially asking for credit for the belated work done on partially reversing the damage. It also claimed eliminating coalfired power generation has saved billions in health-care costs by improving air quality. (In case any one is wondering how those saved billions have benefited patients, it's worth remembering Ontario spends nearly half its budget on health care, is locked in an increasingly ugly spat with health-care workers over budget cuts it insists are necessary and faces stubbornly intractable wait-time challenges, while thousands of residents have no family doctor.)

Overall, the defence of the government's catastrophic handling of the province's electricity sector is typical of the Liberals' habit of giving themselves full credit for their noble intentions, while refusing to accept any blame for unintended, albeit foreseeable, consequences. While doubling the provincial debt since 2003, the Liberals have always insisted that their proposals were for the best, and critics simply didn't understand what they were trying to accomplish. On hydro, first it was about helping the environment, then it was about fostering a new greenenergy industry, now it's about cleaner air. Those are all laudable goals, but it's not enough to have nice ideas. A government must deliver those ideas in an efficient, intelligent way. Or, at least not-quite so ham-fistedly as the Liberals make a habit of doing.

And they clearly haven't learned much. Even while announcing the HST rebate, which will save the average household about $11 a month. the government also reaffirmed its commitment to rolling out a carbon tax, from 2017. Its estimated impact, for the average household, is about $13 a month, according to the government. In other words, it is boasting of its commitment to helping Ontarians by … leaving them short a couple of bucks a month.

This is typical of the Liberals, sadly; and their childcare spaces pledge will likely prove as costly and dysfunctional. A speech from the throne simply isn't enough to demonstrate this government had learned anything from its multibillion-dollar mistakes.
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[Ottawa Sun]
Wynne locks in soaring hydro rates
Ottawa Sun - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Ad Value:$676
Reach: 45442 Page: A16
Premier Kathleen Wynne announced Monday that on Jan. 1, 2017, she's removing the 8%

provincial sales tax on the electricity bills of Ontarians.

That's the 8% tax her predecessor, Dalton McGuinty, imposed on Ontarians' hydro bills for the first time ever on July 1, 2010.

This when he harmonized Ontario's 8% sales tax with the feds' 5% goods and services tax.

While Wynne claims this initiative will save $130 annually on the average household's electricity bill, and, along with other programs, $540 annually for qualified rural residents, it does nothing to address the reason hydro rates are skyrocketing.

That is the Liberals' continuing, economically insane pursuit of expensive and unreliable wind and solar power, which makes the electricity grid run less efficiently, producing power that isn't needed because Ontario has an energy surplus.

While some of the hydro rate increases are due to necessary upgrades to the power grid, former auditor general Jim McCarter reported in 2011 that using the Liberals' own numbers, hydro rates would increase by 7.9% annually over the next five years, "with 56% of that increase due mainly to renewable energy."

In 2015, current auditor general Bonnie Lysyk reported Ontarians paid $37 billion more than the market price for electricity from 2006 to 2014, rising to $133 billion by 2032.

Wynne insisted Monday the Liberals' elimination of coal-fired electricity plants is saving Ontarians $4 billion annually in health costs.

But even if that number is true - and there's no way to confirm it - the Liberals didn't replace coal with wind and solar power.

They used nuclear power and natural gas. Wind and solar power couldn't replace coal because coal in 2003 provided 25% of Ontario's electricity, while wind and solar last year produced just 4%.

Further, wind and solar power, unlike coal, can't provide base load power to the electricity grid on demand and have to backed up by natural gas.

What's really happened is that the Liberals have wasted billions of public dollars on wind and solar power they never needed to spend to achieve the environmental benefits of ending coal use.

Nothing Wynne said on Monday changes that and nothing is going to stop continued rapid price hikes to electricity costs across Ontario.
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[Ottawa Sun]
Wynne's $1B Hydro; Throne speech offers up rebate to Ontario users
Ottawa Sun - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Positive
Byline:Shawn Jeffords

Ad Value:$1,323
Reach: 45442 Page: A4
Liberal Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault insists that Ontario is in such good financial shape, it can afford to give away $1 billion by cutting the HST offhydro bills.

Thibeault made the comments moments after his government delivered a throne speech at Queen's Park, promising relief from soaring hydro rates, effective Jan. 1, 2017. n PC Leader Patrick Brown calls the throne speech a "Band-Aid solution." n Brown calls on the government to stop signing contracts under the Green Energy Act.

The NDP's Andrea Horwath questions how long the cut will last.

The Liberals will knock Ontario's 8% portion of the HST off the bill in the form of a rebate.

Oh, and Ontarians living in rural areas or the north can take 20% offtheir bills as a matter of "fairness," said Thibeault. "That is something we're very proud of because this is a meaningful savings for families," he said. "We've very happy to be doing this. We're in a fiscal position now where we've been doing all of the heavy-lifting over the last few years to make sure that we're going to balance."
The Liberal government has promised to balance the provincial budget by 2018.

Thibeault insisted the government can keep its budget plan and provide hydro relief.

"Over the last 10 years, we've done great things with our energy system," Thibeault

said. "We've made it safe, we've made it reliable, and we've made it clean. Right now, we need to take it to the next level and make it as affordable as it

can be for as many Ontarians as we can."

The HST cut will result in a $130 savings annually for the average household, according to the government.

The cut, which will appear as a rebate on bills, will apply to residential, agricultural and commercial hydro users. Rural ratepayers would receive a further break of 20% under the plan, which would result in an additional $45 a month, or $540 a year.

The government also announced it will create an additional 100,000 licensed child-care spaces for infants and pre-schoolers within five years, starting in 2017.

The throne speech, delivered by Lt.-Gov. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, also pledged to make economic growth and jobs the government's top priority.

And the government moved to address the province's slumping math scores, promising to introduce new supports for students to help with numeracy skills. The new strategy

will include having three "math lead" teachers in elementary schools.

sjeffords@postmedia.com
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[News - National Post]
David Reevely: Kathleen Wynne looks to save her job by saving Ontario voters $130 a year on their hydro bills
News - National Post - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:David Reevely, Ottawa Citizen
Reach: 607500
The provincial government is giving up $1 billion a year by taking its share of the sales tax off Ontario electricity bills, Premier Kathleen Wynne revealed in the speech from the throne for a new legislative session Monday.

It'll save the average household $130 a year, the government estimates. And, Wynne hopes, her job.

She began signalling that she at last understands Ontarians' dissatisfaction with hydro prices after her side lost a previously fairly solid Liberal seat in Scarborough in a byelection a couple of weeks ago. With the 2018 election visible in the distance, Wynne wants to be seen doing something about one of Ontario voters' most widely shared complaints: the fact electricity prices have roughly doubled over the last 10 years.

"Over the course of the past decade, Ontario electricity ratepayers have helped cover the costs associated with removing dirty coal-fired generation from our electricity system," begins the passage of the speech, delivered by Lieutenant-Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell, that deals with hydro prices.

In a long background document put out separately, the government spells out the thinking: "Rate relief is a responsible way to ensure people truly are able to benefit from their investment in a 21st century low-carbon grid to power Ontario's future… With the government's economic plan steadily strengthening Ontario's economy and fiscal position, the province is in a position to make another responsible, fair decision by further reducing the price that households and businesses across Ontario pay for electricity."

Who knows what this means. If the economy was weak before, presumably it was less able to carry the burden of high electricity prices. But they have to say something and it can't be, "We're scared hydro prices will kill us in 2018, so this is what we're doing."

How will the election-year budget be balanced with this big hit to government revenue? Not clear. What will it mean in later years? No clearer.

The provincial government can't unilaterally take part of the federal-provincial sales tax off hydro bills, so it'll add a line with a negative number on it that makes the total charge smaller rather than larger. Conveniently that'll also put it in your face every time you open a bill. It's an amount you'll notice.

Promoting efficiency and conservation would be honest ways of reducing household bills. A billion dollars a year would buy a lot of LED bulbs and water-heaters wraps and pull a lot of old fridges out of basements. Instead we get a blanket price cut for citizens and small businesses; only large consumers get a program to help them use electricity at cheaper times of day, details to come.

There'll be an extra rebate for rural customers. So people who live in dense, easier-to-serve communities will subsidize people who don't.

It's all bad policy but good politics. Both the Progressive Conservatives and the New Democrats have argued for cutting the HST from hydro bills - they can't exactly say it's a bad idea now. Plus the method weakens the bite of a still-unpopular sales tax.

Wynne hasn't been shy about her philosophy, but the conclusion of the throne speech put it plainly.

"As your government continues to build Ontario up, more will feel an increased sense of security," Dowdeswell read to the legislature. "Your government believes that government exists to do the things we cannot do alone. It exists to be a force for good in all our lives - every day and in every corner of this beautiful province we call home."

What are you worried about? This government wants to help you with it, especially if you're in the great mass of voters feeling precarious about your place in the middle class.

Related

Wynne Liberals to eliminate Ontario sales tax on hydro bills and increase child care spaces (news.nationalpost.com<http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/canadian-politics/ontario-government-to-knock-hst-off-electricity-bills-increase-child-care-spaces-in-pocketbook-throne-speech>)

We will get you a doctor if you still don't have one, the speech promised. Yes, he or she might be furious about frozen pay and heavier work, but never mind. Your retirement will be provided for, thanks to our pressuring the feds. If you can't afford post-secondary tuition, it'll be free. There'll be more home care if your elderly parents need help, and - a new promise - another 100,000 licensed child-care spaces by 2022 so you can go to work.

That child-care promise echoes the Liberals' lead-up to the 2014 budget that triggered the election that year. It covers years well into the future, but by making the promise now the Liberals can treat it as a fait accompli and accuse the Progressive Conservatives of cutting child care if they don't adopt the promise as their own come the next campaign.

The Liberals won that one partly by espousing exactly the philosophy that guided Monday's throne speech. We Ontarians voted for majority-government numbers and it's hard to criticize Wynne for carrying on with it.

All these policies address real worries. Reasonable people can disagree about how many of them are properly the government's concern, but if you believe that government "exists to be a force for good in all our lives" (as opposed to, say, to protect our ability to provide for ourselves as much as possible), then health care, child care, home care, affordable higher education and retirement security will all be near the the top of any list of things to attend to.

The fact electricity costs a lot more than it used to probably would not. But you've got to get re-elected to do that other stuff, and when you can see annihilation slouching your way, you do what you have to do.

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[News - National Post]
Ontario government to knock HST off electricity bills, increase child care spaces: Throne Speech
News - National Post - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Ashley Csanady
Reach: 607500
A promise to knock the provincial sales tax off electricity bills and create 100,000 new child care spaces anchors the Ontario government's Throne Speech delivered Monday.

Premier Kathleen Wynne is targeting voters' pocketbooks and family concerns with a mid-mandate legislative refresh that is clearly aimed at boosting her and her Liberal party's popularity before the 2018 election.

Lieutenant-Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell read her first Speech from the Throne Monday, which included promises to improve the elementary math curriculum and more home and nursing care.

Related

Ontario Liberals hope prorogation and Throne Speech will hit 'reset' button after bad-news summer (news.nationalpost.com<http://news.nationalpost.com/news/ontario-premier-kathleen-wynne-proroguing-legislature-ahead-of-new-throne-speech-on-monday>)

Ontario wineries worry cost of selling their bottles in grocery stores will be prohibitively high (news.nationalpost.com<http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/canadian-politics/ontario-wineries-worry-cost-of-selling-their-bottles-in-grocery-stores-will-be-prohibitively-high>)

The move comes after the summer included a byelection loss for the Liberals in Scarborough and months of polling that showed Wynne's approval at an all-time low. It's also an overtly political throne speech when compared to the party's post-election victory speech in 2014.

With the books set to be balanced by the end of March 2018, the government is making a pitch to invest "in the things that matter most to you and that help you in your everyday life," including:

A pledge to remove the provincial portion of the HST - eight per cent - from all electricity bills, both residential and commercial. That should save the average consumer about $130 a year, the government estimates. Rural consumers, who face steep transmission charges, will be offered additional relief, which could save as much as $45 a month when combined with the HST savings. And industrial consumers will be offered even more programs to keep their hydro costs down, as many bemoan those rates as one of many factors pushing manufacturing jobs out of the province. The move will cost the government upwards of $1 billion a year in forgone revenue - almost exactly the same amount it saved by ending the previous Ontario Clean Energy Benefit, which saved consumers about 10 per cent on a month on their bills;

A promise to create 100,000 child care spaces over five years, starting in 2017, is ambitious - and extends beyond the government's current mandate. Importantly, this "will double the current capacity for the 0-4 age group," a government backgrounder notes, addressing concerns that demographic has suffered from fewer spaces since all-day kindergarten rolled out across the province. Newly minted associate minister of early years and child child Indira Naidoo-Harris said the province will spend around $2 billion on the plan, $650 to 700 million on operating costs and $1.3 billion on capital investments. She could not say how much of that money will go to lowering costs for parents;

Adding up to 350,000 home care nursing hours and 1.3 million hours of personal support, a pledge intended to increase support especially among 35- to 65-year-olds who are caught between kids and aging parents in need of support on the other;

An effort to improve math skills, in particular numeracy, by "having up to three math lead teachers in all elementary schools" - a move that comes after last year's standardized test by the Education Quality Alliance of Ontario found half of grade 6 students failed to meet the provincial standards.

The speech also includes a pledge to continue with many programs, including the new Ontario Student Grant. The OSG will merge many existing programs, and remove a tax credit that benefits wealthier families the most, to offer essentially free tuition to low-income students and increase post-secondary support for all but the wealthiest families.

A promised $160 billion for infrastructure will help build or repave 5,000 kilometres of highways - almost half in the north - and 350 kilometres of new rapid transit in city centres such as Waterloo Region, Ottawa and Hamilton. And plans to enact a cap-and-trade system in Ontario will go ahead as planned in early 2017.

Speech from the Throne now online for all you nerds who want to read it for yourself news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2016/09...
(news.ontario.ca<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2016/09/speech-from-the-throne.html>)
#onpoli (twitter.com<http://twitter.com/search?q=%23onpoli>)

-

Ashley Csanady (@AshleyCsanady) September 12, 2016
(twitter.com<http://twitter.com/#!/AshleyCsanady/status/775370621165277184>)

Over the summer the government's negotiations with the Ontario Medical Association to create a new physicians services agreement - the fee schedule for doctors' visits - spectacularly broke down when a well-financed coalition challenged the deal and eventually swayed enough votes to kibosh the deal. But the Liberals aren't looking to make nice with the highest-paid doctors; instead the speech includes a specific attack that precious health-care dollars won't be spent on "the highest-billing physicians or highly paid administrators."

It's just one of many overtly political aspects of a speech usually reserved to outlined the government's legislative agenda.

Wynne's push to be a "social justice premier" is furthered by a promise to follow-up on a plan to ensure parental equity in Ontario, so same-sex parents don't have to legally adopt their own children, an issue highlighted by New Democrat Cheri DiNovo and currently being challenged in the courts.

The two-year legislative agenda also includes a lengthy defence of the government's energy plans alongside its promise to lower electricity bills.

With hydro rates rising an average of 8 per cent per year, what is their long-term solution? They can't cut the HST again next year

"Over the course of the past decade, Ontario electricity ratepayers have helped cover the costs associated with removing dirty coal-fired generation from our electricity system," the speech reads. "And while these investments have resulted in increased costs associated with generation, they have also created savings of more than $4 billion a year in health and other costs associated with smog and pollution from coal-fired generation."

It also notes the government "renegotiated" its Green Energy Investment Agreement to reduce contract costs by $3.7 billion and created a new Large Renewable Procurement process, which saved another "$4.1 billion as compared to previous forecasts" - meaning the government says it's saving money that has not yet been spent.

All this comes after years of criticisms that the Liberals' green-energy policies have driven up costs across the province, with Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk finding last year that Ontario consumers paid $37-billion more than necessary on their hydro bills from 2006 to 2014.

THE CANADIAN PRESS/Darren CalabreseAuditor General Bonnie Lysyk found in her 2015 annual report the Liberals failure to listen to their own experts cost ratepayers $37 billion more than necessary on their electricity bills over seven years.

The move to shuffle money around to provide the targeted relief on electricity bills was swiftly criticized: Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day said the speech included some positive moves for First Nations, but he questioned the "shell game" the Liberals are paying and their commitment to increasing accessing to electricity in remote communities.

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation questioned what good removing the provincial HST from power bill will do in the long run:

"With hydro rates rising an average of 8 per cent per year, what is their long-term solution? They can't cut the HST again next year," said CTF Ontario director Christine Van Geyn. "Paying Ontarians off with their own money isn't just cynical, it's also terrible policy."
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[The Hamilton Spectator]
Throne speech comes with power bill relief; Liberals promise to remove Ontario portion of HST from electricity bills
The Hamilton Spectator - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Keith Leslie The Canadian Press

Ad Value:$2,245
Reach: 103267 Page: A10
Ontario consumers will get some relief from skyrocketing electricity rates under a Liberal government initiative to remove the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax from hydro bills, which the Opposition calls a Band-Aid solution.

The Liberals announced the plan in Monday's throne speech opening the fall session of the legislature, saying Ontario's eight-per-cent slice of the HST would be taken off hydro bills starting in January, and promising additional relief for rural ratepayers.

"It's important to recognize that we're doing something for our remote, rural and northern customers as well," said Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault.

The HST reduction, which would cost taxpayers $1 billion a year, is expected to save the typical Ontario household about $130 a year, and the government projects additional savings of about $540 a year for rural electricity customers.

Just nine months ago Ontario scrapped the Clean Energy Benefit, which provided a 10-per-cent reduction on all parts of electricity bills, including the HST. That program also saved ratepayers just over $130 a year, and also cost about $1 billion annually.

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation said Premier Kathleen Wynne was basically trying to bribe Ontarians with their own money, and called it a "cynical" move.

NDP Leader Andrea Horwath, MPP for Hamilton Centre, said it was the Liberals who put the HST on electricity bills in the first place.

"Six years later the premier says she'll rebate the HST, but people have to wait four more months," said Horwath. "That raises a lot of questions about how long this rebate's going to last and how it will work."

The government said there is no end date for the HST cut on electricity bills. Cancelling the program in the future would require passing legislation.

Progressive Conservative Leader Patrick Brown called the tax cut "merely a Band-Aid solution." He said Wynne ignored years of complaints about rising electricity rates and only took action after losing the Liberal stronghold of Scarborough-Rouge River to the Tories in a Sept. 1 byelection.

Other initiatives in the speech included a plan to create an additional 100,000 licensed child care spaces for kids aged four and under over five years, starting in 2017.

"We're setting aside between $600 to $750 million in terms of operating costs, and $1 to $3 billion in capital funds to make sure we deliver on our promise," said Indira Naidoo-Harris, the associate minister of education and Halton MPP.
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[Windsor Star]
Hydro rebate a 'drop in the bucket,' MPP Gretzky says; Ontario government pledges to remove 8% of HST from bills

Windsor Star - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Positive
Byline:Chris Thompson

Ad Value:$3,084
Reach: 54680 Page: A2
An eight per cent rebate on hydro bills announced in Monday's provincial Throne Speech is "a drop in the bucket," Windsor West MPP Lisa Gretzky says.

And to prove her point she'll be dropping hundreds of hydro bills submitted to her by residents of Windsor-Essex on the desks of Premier Kathleen Wynne and Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault on Tuesday.

"This is a necessity," Gretzky said. "Hydro is a necessity and the Liberal government should have never put it (HST) on the bills to begin with."

Gretzky said the NDP have been pushing for five or six years to have the HST removed from electricity bills to no avail, and Monday's announcement falls short of that. "They are offering an eight per cent rebate, which isn't the same," Gretzky said.

"They could cancel a rebate whenever they feel like cancelling it. It is a drop in the bucket, really. It's not the solution to make hydro rates more affordable in the long run."

As MPPs and dignitaries gathered in Queen's Park's legislative chamber, Lt.-Gov. Elizabeth Dowdeswell read her first speech from the throne.

The speech also included promises to improve the elementary math curriculum and more home and nursing care.

But the hydro issue drew the most attention from the opposition parties.

"One of the best announcements they could have made today is to a stop of the selloffof Hydro One," said Gretzky.

"They didn't make that announcement.

"That would have been a real solid step forward to get energy costs under control and they didn't do that."

Gretzky has collected hundreds of hydro bills from residents and companies in Windsor-Essex, copied them and blacked out the names and addresses.

When Gretzky rises in the house Tuesday, she will use those stacks of bills to prove a point.

"What I'm doing may not force them to do something like that (cancel selling Hydro One) but we've had in the last couple of weeks them say there isn't a crisis, bills aren't that high. And people are really struggling," Gretzky said.

"Putting actual bills on their desks.

"They can't turn a blind eye when they're sitting there right in front of them."

Matt Marchand, the president and CEO of the Windsor-Essex Chamber of Commerce, said lobbying by his group and others across the province made a difference.

"I think what you have to look at is the total cost structure in Ontario and it is one of the higher-end costs, particularly on the electricity side, we've gone from one of the lowest to one of the highest, so it's a step in the right direction," said Marchand.

"I don't know if we're all the way there in one session of parliament but I think it's a recognition that the cost of electricity needs to be lowered to attract and retain business and also for consumers to have money to spend."
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[Times-Journal (St.Thomas)]
Hydro rebate nothing but political pandering, Yurek; Elgin-Middlesex- London MPP JeffYurek fearful proposed rebate may result in more debt
Times-Journal (St.Thomas) - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:Jennifer Bieman

Ad Value:$640
Reach: 8859 Page: A3
Ontario ratepayers are about to get an eight per cent break on their electricity bills - but not everyone thinks it's a bright idea.

Elgin-Middlesex-London MPP Jeff Yurek has a list of misgivings after Monday's throne speech, where Premier Kathleen Wynne announced taxpayers won't be on the hook for the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax on hydro. The move will see an eight per cent rebate, an amount equal to the province's portion of the HST, added to monthly electricity bills.

"You continue to face electricity cost increases above the level of inflation," said Wynne in her speech.

"Whether in Kenora, Sudbury, Belleville, London or Barrie, your government has listened to and has heard your concerns. It recognizes that the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets."

The government will introduce legislation to bring the eight percent rebate into effect and is aiming to have the program in place by Jan. 2017. The move will save the average household $130 each year on hydro, according to government estimates. Small businesses are also eligible for the rebate.

Where farmers and rural ratepayers are concerned, the government pledged to enhance the existing support program. "Together, the rebate of the provincial portion of the HST and the enhanced RRRP (Rural or Remote Electricity Protection) will provide eligible rural customers across Ontario with onbill monthly savings of about 20 per cent, or about $45 per month," said the government in a statement.

Though he's encouraged the government admits rising hydro costs are an important issue, Yurek said the moves don't do enough to stop the serious strain electricity prices are having on families.

"If Kathleen Wynne was really serious about tackling our energy rates, she'd first of all stop signing contracts for energy we don't need and stop selling off Hydro One. Under her plan, hydro rates are going to continue to escalate," said Yurek.

"This government's policies are the reason why our energy rates are continually increasing and until they tackle those issues we're going to continue to see energy rates remain unaffordable." Yurek has several problems with the plan, its timing, implementation and long-term implications.

He's wary the rebate savings for families will be offset by other increases. He's concerned the move is political pandering after the Liberal Party's loss in the Scarborough-Rouge River byelection.

But most of all, Yurek is unsure where the money for the rebate is actually coming from, since the cash the province gets from HST is already being used elsewhere.

"It will be interesting to see where the money comes from for this rebate. They're not really cutting off the HST, they're going to rebate the HST back. I'm fearful that this might go towards more debt in the hydro system," he said.

As for the proposed enhancements to the rural support program, Yurek said he's awaiting the specifics on how and when the new policies will come into effect.

"I'm just waiting to see what the details are. Everyone needs some relief on energy bills and my office will be waiting for the details so we can help people," he stressed.
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[The Sault Star]
Liberal strategy revealed
The Sault Star - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Jerry Agar

Ad Value:$787
Reach: 17077 Page: A6
Bad news for anyone who thinks the Ontario Liberals' freshness date was years ago and it is well past time for them to be replaced - they may win the next election.

How will they do it? By employing their timetested Lie-and-Buy strategy.

They will continue to tell the people of this province anything needed to win, regardless of the truth of the statement, and they will continue to buy offthe unions and anyone who thinks it is great to have someone else pay their bills.

Consider the events of just the past few days. Premier Kathleen Wynne suddenly figured out that electricity rates are too high. After losing a byelection in a riding - Scarborough-

Rouge River - her party has held since its creation, she said of hydro rates: "It's a concern across the province and I recognize that. I've heard those concerns and those concerns will become part of our considerations as we go."

She is so concerned that she has prorogued government and promises a throne speech and a reset, ushering in the new caring Liberals as early as Monday.

So you see, it is all OK now. She has a handle on it.

Never mind who got us in this mess in the first place. Is it true that she has a solution? Doesn't matter.

Just as when former premier Dalton McGuinty was replaced by Wynne, and we were told that it was an entirely new party, just enough people will believe it to push the Liberals over the top in order to elect them in 2018.

But it wasn't a new government. It was just a different face on the same government. She was an important member of the re-election committee and the McGuinty administration - the same government that cancelled power plant construction in order to win a few seats, yet insisted she had nothing to do with it. Truth?

Wynne played fast and loose with the financial cost of that decision until people were worn out by the discussion. Truth is tedious.

The Liberals will continue to buy the support of the province's 1.3 million civil servants and their families - and the unions will shovel money toward their re-election.

Consider the outrage over taxpayers' dollars going to education unions in order to pay the unions' expenses in negotiating with the government. How is that not just a kickback? Meanwhile, we had an announcement Friday from Education Minister Mitzie Hunter that allday kindergarten will save Ontario parents $1 billion in daycare by the end of the year.

But we were assured when the program was instituted that it was not a daycare program.

That one has the advantage to the Liberals of being both a lie and a buy - as it benefits parents who would rather someone else pay. Vote Liberal for other people's money.

Unions paid off: Check. New empathy with the people on electricity: Check.

A story enough people will believe: Check. Parents paid off: check.

Lie and Buy. The suckers will lap it up.
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[The Chatham Daily News]
MPP says Liberals playing 'shell game' with hydro rates; Nicholls believes provincial budget will be balanced on 'backs of Ontarians'
The Chatham Daily News - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:Ellwood Shreve

Ad Value:$566
Reach: 15320 Page: A1 / Front
Rick Nicholls said the Liberal government's attempt to "hit the reset button" by proroguing government last week and delivering a throne speech on Monday "is just too little too late."

The Chatham-Kent Essex MPP is particularly critical of Kathleen Wynne's government's attempt to address skyrocketing electricity rates with a promise to knock off the eight-per-cent provincial portion of the HST offenergy bills. "This government is using a

band-aid solution on a gash that requires sutures," Nicholls said.

He points to the fact about a year ago the Liberal government

removed the Clean Energy Benefit, which saved consumers about 10 per cent on their energy bills.

"And now they want to give you an eight-per-cent

reduction," Nicholls said. "It's a shell game."

The MPP said he found it interesting that earlier this summer, Ontario Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault stated he had no idea how many people in Ontario were behind on their electricity bills.

Citing that 8.2 per cent of Ontario

households are in arrears on their hydro bills, Nicholls said, "if that doesn't spell crisis, I don't know what does. But he (Thibeault) didn't seem to think it was a crisis at that time."

"If Wynne and her Liberal government were serious about addressing the Hydro One crisis. .. then they need to halt any further sales of Hydro One shares," he said.

"Stop signing expensive contracts for energy we don't need," he added.

Nicholls said another alarming situation is happening with utilities when people will start paying tax on natural gas usage beginning in January.

Noting just like it is not clear about everything that constitutes the delivery charges on hydro bills, Nicholls is concerned the

public also won't get the full picture regarding a new tax on natural gas.

"I believe that the Liberal government lobbied the Ontario Energy Board and said, 'We don't want that cap-and-trade tax on natural gas. .. as separate line item (on bills). We want it buried in the total of delivery charges,'" he said.

He added the Liberals never mentioned natural gas once in the throne speech.

Nicholls is also concerned about how the Liberals will live up to a promise to balance the budget.

"Trust me. .. it will be on the backs of Ontarians," he said.

Nicholls believes from now until the end of June, the Liberals will be introducing bills "that'll make your head spin -all trying to balance the budget."

Then in the final year before the

2018 election, he predicts, "they're going to play kiss and make up."

Some of the other promises outlined in Monday's throne speech include: creating 100,000 childcare spaces over five years beginning in 2017; adding up 350,00 homeware nursing hours and 1.3 million hours of personal support; and improving math skills by having up to three math lead teachers in all elementary schools.

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For more on the throne speech see Page B5
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[Stratford Beacon-Herald]
What Wynne must do in the fall session
Stratford Beacon-Herald - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Ad Value:$282
Reach: 10143 Page: A5
Ontario's government needs a fresh start, which is why Premier Kathleen Wynne has prorogued the legislature and promised a throne speech for Monday. With less than two years before the next election, the provincial Liberals are staggering in the polls and are desperately seeking to patch their political vulnerabilities.

For instance, Wynne wants to help people cope with rising hydro costs. "It's an urgent issue for the minister of energy," she said.

And, floundering on the party-financing file, the Liberals also want to quickly pass legislation to rid themselves of this ethical albatross.

But between now and the spring of 2018, there are other important files to confront:
Health care, specifically doctors: The province still has no agreement with its physicians, who turned down a limp offer this summer as they seek binding arbitration for future disputes. The doctors have been without a contract for more than two years, and this protracted standoffcould hurt Ontario's chances of retaining the best of them.

The province was also forced to flip-flop on its autism support plan earlier this year, and needs to more explicitly figure out support for developmentally challenged Ontarians and seniors.

Education, specifically school closings: Many school board have embarked on the unenviable exercise of determining which schools must close. This is influenced, in part, by a provincial decision to no longer provide top-up funding to help keep underenrolled community schools afloat. The province can do better.

Provincial jails: Inmate deaths, labour disputes with correctional officers, inmate class-action lawsuits, criticism from community advisory boards - there is still much to be acknowledged (let alone fixed) at Ontario's jails. Let's hope the throne speech moves this agenda along.

Spending priorities: Ontario's debt is now more than $300 billion. Where can spending be curtailed to keep the focus on the big picture? Rebates on electric vehicles, for instance, are essentially a sop to those who can already afford them. The province must also keep a close eye on the cap-andtrade system it's set to join; it needs the returns to pay for further investment.

Wynne can expect the usual post-throne speech grilling from the opposition at Queen's Park. Refocusing on real priorities will give her a better chance at improving Ontarians' lives - and maybe shoring up Liberal chances in 2018.
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[Ottawa Sun]
Giveaway; Brown, Horwath slam rebate plan
Ottawa Sun - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Shawn Jeffords

Ad Value:$956
Reach: 45442 Page: A5
Just call it the "Raymond Cho Hydro Benefit."

That's what Progres -sive Conservative Leader Patrick Brown dubbed the 8% HST rebate on hydro bills announced Monday. Brown said had it not been for Cho's recent breakthrough byelection victory in Scarborough-Rouge River, the government would have failed to address rising hydro rates.

"We should be calling it the Raymond Cho Hydro Benefit because if it wasn't for his victory in a Liberal stronghold less than two weeks ago, this government would still be ignoring the crisis," he said.

Brown called the measure a "Band-Aid solution" that

doesn't actually address the root cause of rising hydro rates.

He urged the government to stop signing contracts under the Green Energy Act and to halt the sale of Hydro One.

Brown said that with this new spending he doesn't think the Liberals will balance the budget in 2018 as promised.

"I still believe if you look at all of the commitments the government is making, that the numbers don't add up and they're not going to have a balanced budget," he said.

NDP Leader Andrea Horwath questioned how long the HST hydro cut will last. As recently as last Friday, she had called on the government to do away with the tax on electricity.

sjeffords@postmedia.com
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[Peterborough Examiner]
Leal pleased with lifting of sales tax from hydro bills
Peterborough Examiner - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Jessica Nyznik

Ad Value:$1,122
Reach: 19693 Page: A1 / Front
With electricity rates top of mind for constituents, Peterborough's MPP is pleased with the Ontario government's latest plans announced during its

Throne Speech Monday.

The provincial government has promised to cut the 8 per cent provincial sales tax off hydro bills as of Jan. 1. Agriculture,

Food and Rural Affairs Minister and Peterborough MPP JeffLeal said he's been meeting with constituents in the riding, both from the city and the county, over the last few months.

"The number one issue on everybody's mind has been electricity rates," Leal said, adding he's pleased to see that issue being addressed.

Rural consumers, who face higher delivery and transmission fees, will get extra relief. They'll get an additional 12 per cent cut on top of the PST knock off.

"We're going to increase the rural-rate plan to bring about more fairness for rural consumers, which will also impact both businesses and farming operations in rural communities," said Leal.

While the removal of the PST and the additional cut provided to rural residents is significant, Leal said, the government still recognizes there's some "systemic issues" regarding agencies delivering electricity.

"We're also prepared to look at that aspect of the electricity sector too," he said.

The Ontario government also announced it'll be adding 100,000 new child-care spaces, improving the elementary math curriculum and increasing nursing and home care hours.

New child-care spaces are to be created over the next five years, starting in 2017.

The added spaces will help address another issue Leal said he often hears about from middle-class families.

"This is a very important initiative for the riding of Peterborough," he said.

To improve math skills, the province pledged that up to three lead math teachers will be added in all elementary schools.

"We know through recent EQOA scores that we need to brush up on our math skills a bit and we want to make sure that happens," Leal said.

A promise to add up to 350,000 home care nursing hours and 1.3 million hours of personal support was also made.

"Additional nursing hours through home care are real priority items."

Leal said he thinks his government is hearing what Ontarians are saying and taking note.

"We're pleased that when you listen to people and through that to hear their concerns reflected today from the speech from the throne."

Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes Brock Progressive Conservative MPP Laurie Scott was not impressed with the announcement.

She called the Throne Speech "magic beans politicking at its worst," in a release.

Scott thought the timing was "more than suspect" after the Ontario government lost a member in the Scarborough-Rouge River by-election to Conservatives 12 days ago.

Though the Ontario government announced a "new direction" Monday, she stated there's nothing new about it.

Electricity costs continue to devastate households, especially in rural areas with the skyrocketing cost of delivery, he wrote.

What's ironic, he stated, is that the Wynne government is now trying to remove the cost of PST on electricity bills that they implemented.

"Clearly the Wynne government is in panic mode to think anyone will fall for this magic beans trick," Scott stated.

NOTE: See more coverage on Page B3.

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[London Free Press]
Grits plug hydro savings; Area opposition MPPs say throne speech HST rebate vow is really about saving the Wynne government
London Free Press - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Jonathan Sher

Ad Value:$3,477

Reach: 70995 Page: A1 / Front
Like wind turbines whose spinning provokes outrage in Southwest Ontario, the province ' s Liberals have spun hydro rates again, promising to scrap the HST just months after it swept aside abigger benefit.

Starting in January, Ontarians will get an eight per cent rebate for the provincial share of the harmonized sales tax, while rural residents get even bigger reductions, the Liberals announced in Monday ' s throne speech opening the fall session of the legislature.

But opposition MPPs in London say Kathleen Wynne ' s government is concerned only about staying in power after losing a Grit stronghold Sept. 1 in the Scarborough-Rouge River byeletion.

" This is an elaborate PR exercise ," London West New Democrat MPP Peggy Sattler said.

Just nine months ago, Ontario scrapped its so-called Clean Energy Benefit that cut electricity bills by 10 per cent. That program saved ratepayers about $130 ayear, about the same as cutting eight percentage points off the HST.

The musical chairs-approach does nothingto restrain the cost of electricity, said Progressive Conservative MPP Jeff Yurek, who blames high provincial subsidies for wind and solar power.

" If they were really serious about energy rates, they ' d stop signing new contracts for energy we don ' t need ," the Elgin-Middlesex-London MPP said.

Taxpayers will have to make up the $1 billion in revenue lost from the rebate, and Yurek said he suspects the tab will be added to debt.

His concerns are shared by the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, which accused the Wynne Liberals of trying to bribe Ontarians with their own money.

" Our electricity bills grow at an average of eight per cent a year, so if we have a reduction of eight per cent in 2017, what ' s goingto happen in the next year when they don ' t have an HST to cut ?" said Christine Van Geyn, spokesperson for the federation in Ontario.

Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault defendedthe change, saying, " It ' s important to recognize that we ' re doing somethingfor our remote, rural and northern customers as well ." The government projects additional savings of about $540 a year for rural electricity customers.

The need for help in cities is apparent, too; the number of Londoners who have fallen behind paying electricity bills has grown from 11,077 in 2013 to 12,406 last year. Higher customer arrears also were found in St. Thomas, Woodstock, Sarnia and Chatham-Kent.

NDP Leader AndreaHorwath said it was the Liberals who put the HST on electricity bills in thefirstplace.

" Six years later the premier says she ' ll rebate the HST, but people have to wait four more months ," Horwath said. " That raises a lot of questions about how long this rebate ' s going to last and how it will work ." The government said it has no end date yet for the HST cut.

PC Leader Patrick Brown said Wynne ignored years of complaints about rising electricity rates until the Liberals lost the recent byelection. " The problems of everyday Ontarians are never a problem until it ' s Premier Wynne ' s problem ." Other initiatives in the throne speech include a plan to create an additional 100,000 licensed child -care spaces for kids four and under over five years, starting in 2017.

" We ' re setting aside between $600 (million) to $750 million in terms of operating costs, and $1 (billion) to $3 billion in capital funds to make sure we deliver on our promise ," said Indira Naidoo-Harris, the associate education minister.

The throne speech was triggered by Wynne ' s move last week to prorogue the legislature, saying the gov-ernment wanted to reset priorities midway through its mandate - the next election less than two years away.

Auditor general Bonnie Lysyk has said the electricity portion of hydro bills for homes and small businesses rose 70 per cent between 2006 and 2014.

The NDP and Tories repeatedtheir demands Monday that the Liberals stop selling more shares in Ontario ' s largest electricity transmission utility - Hydro One - warning further privatization will force electricity rates higher.

The Liberals say rates rosebecause Ontario stopped burning coal to generate electricity and invested heavily in transmission grid upgrades after years of neglect. They point out that the Ontario Energy Board sets rates, not Hydro One.

The throne speech also repeated the Liberals ' plan to introduce a cap-and-trade system in January, which the government predicts will add about $5 a month to home heating bills and about four cents a litre to the price ofgasoline.
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[tvo.org]
The Ontario Liberals at the Mid-Point | TVO.org
tvo.org - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
The Agenda examines why Premier Kathleen Wynne's personal popularity rating is at an all-time low.
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[Welland Tribune]
Mud slinging possible at the plowing match
Welland Tribune - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Jim Merriam

Ad Value:$516
Reach: 13164 Page: A4
Ontario's major annual plowing match is one of the few events where Toronto-centric

politicians pay lip service to rural Ontario.

The International Plowing Match and Rural Expo (IPM) is being held this year in Wellington County near Harriston, Sept. 20-24.

Ron Faulkner, its chairperson, says it's the only event for which "the Ontario legislature closes two days."

That's so the VIPs can get a photo taken plowing a furrow, just as if they knew what they were doing.

Plus, it doesn't hurt them to be seen getting a little dust on their boots.

But the match has not always been kind to politicians.

This year, Premier Kathleen Wynne's popularity in rural Ontario might be the lowest of any premier in modern memory. It's hard to predict what that will mean in terms of the welcome she receives.

Her epiphany on the importance of "pocket book" issues in the province will do little to soften her reception.

The premier turned a deaf ear to mounting evidence of problems, most importantly power poverty in rural Ontario, due to high electricity rates brought by the Green Energy Act, until the voters of Scarborough rang her bell by delivering the Conservatives a byelection victory.

No one will believe her newfound concern for suffering residents springs from any deep warm and fuzzies for people.

It will pass no one's notice that Wynne waited until the issues looked as if they might end her political career before deciding to act.

Getting back to politicians and the IPM, it was back in 2008 that John Tory, then provincial Conservative leader, learned it isn't always rainbows and lollipops when you fight with a rural member.

Tory and his maverick MPP Bill Murdoch had parted ways over the issue of funding for religious schools.

During the IPM parade, the Conservative leader and his caucus members were roundly booed by hundreds. The outcast Murdoch, riding on his own float, was greeted with loud cheers of support.

To be fair, the match was in Murdoch's home riding, although many of the cheering folks were from outside the area.

That political disaster was nothing compared with the match four years earlier when then-premier Dalton McGuinty sealed the fate of Liberals as perpetual outsiders in rural Ontario.

At the time, farmers were in the midst of one of the worst crises they ever faced, the so-called mad cow disaster.

In a speech that is still talked about in coffee shops to this day, McGuinty uttered nary a word about mad cow and instead spoke about funding for rural schools.

It was such a fundamental misread of the concerns of the audience that it should be used in Public Speaking 101 as an example of what not to do.

Today more funding for rural schools would be a blessing since many are closing and community life, built around them, is being yanked offbalance.

However, as critical as school closings are, they're not the biggest problem facing rural Ontario, home of the aforementioned power poverty crisis.

Also, it's about far more than pocket book issues. When rural residents can't afford hydro to run their pumps, it's also a public health crisis. Without pumps, thousands of rural residents have no fresh water for drinking, cooking or bathing and none to flush toilets.

Perhaps, after turning her furrow, Wynne could visit a home or two where power's been cut offto see what life can really be like outside the Big Smoke.

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[Beach Mirror]
Opposition leaders take aim at Liberal plan to rebate HST on soaring hydro bills
Beach Mirror - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:David Nickle

Ad Value:$69
Reach: 57750
Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne's proposed plan to rebate Hydro One customers the equivalent of the Ontario portion of the HST - about eight per cent - drew fire from opposition leaders.

Ontario Progressive Conservative leader Patrick Brown said that it might as well have been called "the Raymond Cho Hydro Benefit," in reference to former City Councillor Raymond Cho's victory two weeks ago in the Scarborough Rouge River byelection.

And New Democratic Party leader Andrea Horwath noted that the rebate was similar to her party's 2010 proposal to simply take the HST off hydro purchases.

The Wynne proposal, articulated in the September 12 throne speech, merely rebates the amount - about eight per cent.

"Just take the HST off hydro already," said Horwath, in a news conference offering her party's response to the throne speech. "Once and for all. Just do it. Get over it. When seniors open their next hydro bill they should see an eight per cent cut."

Horwath wouldn't take credit for the policy change.

"I'm happy for the families of Ontario if they can get a break on the hydro bill," she said.

But Patrick Brown was a different story. He said that Cho's victory in Scarborough Rouge River, which has been a stronghold for Liberals for more than two decades, was likely the prime motivation for Wynne's policy shift.

"The Ontario PCs have called on the Liberal government to take the HST off the hydro bills for years," he said. "Now this Liberal government wants to take credit for it after families and businesses have spoken out. We should be calling it the Raymond Cho hydro benefit. If it wasn't for his victory two weeks ago this government would still be ignoring the problem."

Brown was also skeptical at projections in the throne speech indicating that the provincial budget would be balanced in 2017/2018.

And he noted that the speech made no mention of additional funding or resources for parents of children with autism.
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[North Bay Nugget]
Liberals cut HST off hydro; Northerners can take another 20 per cent off their bills
North Bay Nugget - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Positive
Byline:Shawn Jeffords

Ad Value:$1,225
Reach: 11505 Page: A1 / Front
Liberal Energy Minister Glenn Thibeault insists Ontario is in such good financial shape, it can afford to give away $1 billion by cutting the HST offhydro bills.

Thibeault made the comments Monday moments after his government delivered a throne speech at Queen's Park, promising relief from soaring hydro rates, effective Jan. 1, 2017.

The Liberals will knock Ontario's eight per cent portion of the HST offthe bill in the form of a rebate.

And Ontarians living in rural areas or the North can take another 20 per cent offtheir bills as a matter of "fairness," said Thibeault. "That is something we're very proud of because this is a meaningful savings for families," he said. "We've very happy to be doing this. We're in a fiscal position now where we've been doing all of the heavy-lifting over the past few years to make sure that we're going to balance."

The Liberal government has promised to balance the provincial budget by 2018.

Thibeault insisted the government can keep its budget plan and provide hydro relief.

"Over the last 10 years, we've done great things with our energy system," Thibeault said. "We've made it safe, we've made it reliable, and we've made it clean. Right now, we need to take it to the next level and make it as affordable as it can be for as many Ontarians as we can."

The HST cut will result in a $130 savings annually for the average household, according to the government.

The cut, which will appear as a rebate on bills, will apply to residential, agricultural and commercial hydro users. Rural and Northern ratepayers will receive a further break of 20 per cent under the plan, which will result in an additional $45 a month, or $540 a year.

But that amount is no more than a "slap in the face," says one Port Loring resident.

"I guess she (Premier Kathleen Wynne) assumed we're a bunch of uneducated people. To announce this and believe it will make a difference to those who are really struggling is a slap in the face," she said.

The Port Loring resident, who asked to remain anonymous, said she owns two properties and pays more than $800 a month for hydro.

"My bills will be a lot higher in the winter," she said. "It's not easy. I've had to juggle my finances so I can pay my hydro bill."

She said cutting other costs such as groceries is common.

"I guess they think seniors are rich," added a North Bay woman. "My bill is high enough and I'm not one to run around with all of the lights on. I have one light on at night to watch television."

The 90-year-old said her hydro bills are about $170.

Nipissing MPP Vic Fedeli said the Liberals "squandered an opportunity to provide Ontarians with relief from skyrocketing hydro rates.

"This government will borrow money and Ontario residents will be charged interest and yet it will do nothing to fix the problem."

Fedeli said the Financial Accountability Officer recently indicated that Ontario's average household home energy costs climbed by $295 annually from 2010 to 2014. In addition, since May 1, 2015 households have faced a further increase of $254.96 on their bills.

"Since the Liberal government first took office, average households in Ontario are paying $1,000 more a year on their annual hydro bills. Today's announcement does nothing to address the systemic issues that have caused hydro rates to skyrocket. It's simply window dressing, Fedeli said.

"If Premier Wynne is serious about tackling the province's energy crisis, the Liberal government would immediately halt any further sales of Hydro One shares, and stop signing contracts for energy we don't need," he said.

The Liberals say ratepayers have helped cover the costs associated with removing coal-fired generation from the electricity system. "And while those investments have resulted in increased costs associated with generation, they have also created savings of more than $4 billion a year in health and other costs associated with smog and pollution from coal-fired generation," the speech says.

The government also announced it will create an additional 100,000 licensed child care spaces for infants and pre-schoolers within five years, starting in 2017.

The speech also pledged to make economic growth and jobs the government's top priority.

In the speech, the government also moved to address the province's slumping math scores, promising to introduce new supports for students to help with numeracy skills. The new strategy will include having three "math lead" teachers in all elementary schools.

The speech also took a shot at Ontario's doctors, who are locked in a high-profile contract dispute with the province.

"(The government) believes that additional resources for health care should be directed where they will help patients most, at the front lines -not only to the highestbilling physicians or highly paid administrators."

With files from Jennifer Hamilton- McCharles/The Nugget

Five promises 8% rebate on hydro bills - an amount equal to the provincial portion of the HST 20% rebate for rural and Northern hydro ratepayers 100,000 new child-care spaces over five years, starting in 2017. 3 new "math lead" teachers in every elementary school 350,000 nursing hours added to the home-care system
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[London Free Press]
Giving and taking
London Free Press - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:Jim White

Ad Value:$365
Reach: 70995 Page: A5
Regarding the online article Liberals promise 8 % cut to hydro bill (Sept. 12).

So, Premier Kathleen Wynne, please explain again how you are going to help me pay my bills ? You just announced that, starting in January, my electricity bill will go down by $10 a month. Is it just a coincidence that also in January, the new carbon tax will cost me $13 a month ? Time for you to go, Kathleen.

Jim White

London
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[The Hamilton Spectator]
Proof of a new start remains to be seen
The Hamilton Spectator - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Positive
Byline:Howard Elliott

Ad Value:$2,438
Reach: 103267 Page: A8
The day after the Wynne government's attempt to "reset" the agenda, the most common question seems to be: Will it work? If that's the measure, the answer is probably no.

Saving the average consumer $130 per year on hydro isn't dramatic. The way rates have been increasing, that relief will be sucked up in a few months. The pledge to introduce 100,000 new child care spaces is more substantive, but still relatively modest compared to the need. Ditto with the plan to add up to 350,000 home care nursing hours and 1.3 million hours of personal support worker care. Both are sorely needed but these measures are really Band-Aids considering the scope of the challenge.

But in any case, the question shouldn't be whether or not the "reset" can save the government. It should be: Does this signal a change in the way the government plans to move forward? If these changes, relatively modest as they are, signify that the government is listening to what Ontarians are saying, the reset will have been a good thing for the province. If, however, it's more of a political manoeuvre intended to rescue the government's sagging fortunes, it will have been a shallow tactic employed in vain.

This is just a starting point. The short-term hydro relief is start, but the government now needs to tell us how it intends to stop the seemingly endless rate hikes. It needs to slow down or even scrap further Hydro One share sell-offs. The government has not convinced anything like a majority of Ontarians of the wisdom of that strategy, and it needs to slow down until it can. Continued divesting of such an important public resource without reasonable public support isn't good governance.

A government that was really reset would also be respectful and collaborative. A good measure of that will be whether or not private member's bills, such as Hamilton East-Stoney Creek NDP MP Paul Miller's Bill 185, stay alive and in the legislative pipeline. Miller's bill, which prior to proroguing last week had all-party support, sought an evidence-based approach to setting social assistance rates. Historically such bills die when a legislative session ends. If, after years of effort and good work done so far on the matter by all parties, the bill dies on the alter of political partisanship, it will be a travesty.

Other government plans, such as infrastructure investment on transit - including in Hamilton - and a new approach to helping low-income families pay for post-secondary education, remain on the books, and that's good.

But if the government really wants a fresh start, it needs to prove that by listening and acting in a more collaborative way for the rest of its mandate. That, more than the throne speech, will tell the story.

Howard Elliott
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[www.cbc.ca]
Ontario government to bring in electricity bill rebates - Toronto - CBC News
www.cbc.ca - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
The Ontario government promised in a throne speech today that it will provide rebates to urban and rural residents and small businesses to help offset high electricity rates.
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[www.citynews.ca]
Liberals promise to remove Ontario portion of HST from hydro bills - CityNews
www.citynews.ca - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Ontario home owners, farmers and small businesses will get some relief from soaring electricity prices starting in January when the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax is removed from hydro bills.
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[www.standard-freeholder.com]
Give with one hand, take with another | Cornwall Standard Freeholder
www.standard-freeholder.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Two weeks ago this column put figures behind the continuing rhetoric of Ontario residents having trouble paying their electricity bills, by publishing the actual totals as at December 31, 2015, 8.5 months and two rate increases ago, of those with accounts in arrears
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[globalnews.ca]
Ontario Liberals promise to remove provincial portion of HST from hydro bills | Globalnews.ca
globalnews.ca - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Ontario’s Liberal government has announced plans to remove the provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax (HST) from hydro bills to offset soaring costs for ratepayers.
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[Sudbury Star]
Hydro sale a bad deal
Sudbury Star - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Positive
Byline:Bob Hibbs

Ad Value:$509
Reach: 14934 Page: A10
There seems to be a lot of smiling faces in the political arena as of late. I guess you can't blame them, given the bad shape of our infrastructure. It is clear that our roads need to be addressed now, but at what cost?

Well, this is one face that isn't smiling at all. The sale of Hydro One is a bad deal and many experts have voiced this.

We've been once again railroaded into accepting our fate from this government and the previous Liberal government. Let's be honest about this. The hidden agenda from this sale is to help reduce the debt created by the same Liberals that put Ontario taxpayers further into debt.

And why do our governments get this right to sell publicly owned assets without some sort of accountability and means test? Because we don't have one. There needs to be accountability for our government leaders' actions. We need a means test where it can be demonstrated that the decision of the day is not just short term, but can truly show long-term benefits.

Guess what? They can't. Any smart businessperson will tell you an investment that can generate consistent, predictable revenue and one that never stops is one of the best assets one can ever own. That is why the market is happy to take ownership.

Hydro One is a publicly owned asset.

The Liberals are hoodwinking us in believing there are long-term benefits from this sale and that the proceeds used to invest in our infrastructure will create long-term jobs. If infrastructure is the only reason for selling Hydro One, why could there not have been other means to raising cash, such as issuing infrastructure bonds?

Here's the sad thing after it is all is said and done: The behavior of our present and future governments will not change because of our lack of will to make the necessary remedies for change. We seem to want to be a society that is always "politically correct." We seem to be a society that is afraid to deal with the elephant in the room. We have to stop this madness if we are ever want to get out of this massive debt. I'm still not smiling.

Bob Hibbs Sudbury
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[North Bay Nugget]
Heat turned up on Kathleen Wynne; Hydro-themed hot sauce labels poke fun at the premier
North Bay Nugget - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:Gord Young

Ad Value:$1,033
Reach: 11505 Page: A1 / Front
Peter Magill has decided to have a little fun with all the heat Premier Kathleen Wynne has been taking over skyrocketing hydro rates.

The marketing and communications co-ordinator at Buckstone Inc. Gifts and Gourmet Foods has created hydro-themed hot sauce labels poking fun at the premier.

"We kept it polite and playful," said Magill, noting the Premier hot sauce labels, although light-hearted, still reflect a sentiment that's shared by many Ontario residents.

One of the labels shows a caricature of a snarling Wynne dressed like the Grim Reaper, complete with cloak and scythe. Across the

blade of the scythe are the words Wynnter is Coming - a reference to the popular HBO series Game of Thrones. The label also includes a short blurb explaining how the sauce won't reduce your hydro bill, but will keep you warm.

A second label uses the same snarling face, but shows Wynne with seven heads and tentacles. The sauce is called Hydra Wynne.

Both of the labels say apply liberally and repeat.

"Staunch Conservatives can give them to their Liberal friends as gifts," Magill jests.

A wholesale and distributing company, Buckstone deals in products such as salad dressings, barbecue and hot sauces. The firm customizes labels and offers a variety of its own designs.

So naturally, this isn't the first time Magill has clowned around with condiments, or poked fun at a Canadian politician.

He previously created a label targeting former prime minister Stephen Harper.

And, like the Premier hot sauces, Magill said the "Harper burns my Ass" hot sauce is still selling well.

Under increasing pressure to address rising hydro costs, the Liberals announced Monday they will knock Ontario's eight per cent portion of the HST offthe bill in the form of a rebate, with those living in rural areas or the North getting an additional two per cent offtheir bills.

The HST cut will result in a $130 savings annually for the average household, according to the government.

The cut, which will appear as a rebate on bills, will apply to residential, agricultural and commercial hydro users. Rural ratepayers would receive a further break of 20 per cent under the plan, which would result in an additional $45 a month, or $540 a year.
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[www.thespec.com]
Rising hydro bills are continuing to shock the public
www.thespec.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Ornella Montini has tried installing LED lights, reducing her air conditioning use, hang drying her laundry, and using electricity when prices are cheapest — but nothing seems to stop the rise of her hydro bill.
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[Peterborough Examiner]
Community engagement sought; As PDI sale opponents argue council isn't listeninsg to them, council agrees to a community engagement plan for the potential sale to Hydro One

Peterborough Examiner - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Joelle Kovach

Ad Value:$1,322
Reach: 19693 Page: A1 / Front
After hearing from a dozen upset citizens Monday night, council voted to develop a new plan to inform people - and hear their opinions - on the prospective sale of the publically owned utility to Hydro One.

About 80 people attended a council meeting at Market Hall on Monday; 13 of them stepped up to the microphone and told council they don't want Peterborough Distribution Inc. (PDI) sold.

They also all said they felt council wasn't listening to them.

Fred Hahn, the president of CUPE Ontario, councillors that 93 per cent of respondents in an Environics poll - commissioned by CUPE - said they don't want the utility sold.

"It's time these people are listened to," he said, to enthusiastic applause. "Isn't that your role as councillors?" Council later said that in fact, they are going to have city staff develop a plan to inform citizens about the possible deal - and also listen.

The idea came from Coun. Diane Therrien, who said she wanted staff to write a "community engagement plan" - and put it in action the sooner the better.

She doesn't want to wait until Hydro One, which has been negotiating with city officials to potentially buy PDI, to make them an offer. She wants council to "engage" more with the public, now.

She pointed out there was only one public meeting about the prospective deal back in March.

"One meeting doesn't cut it," she said.

Hanchet Halsey

Therrien didn't describe the plan she'd like to see, particularly. She only said she wanted it to engage and inform citizens.

But Coun. Dean Pappas said there are all kinds of ways council can reach constituents.

"Maybe a ward meeting, or a series of ward meetings, or open houses or coffee houses," he said.

Other councillors voted to support Therrien's idea, so city staffis expected to prepare a plan.

Meanwhile, councillors heard 13 delegations about the matter on Monday evening - and all of them opposed a sale. After every delegation there was wild applause.

Guy Hanchet told councillors that at the meeting in March, the public heard from Hydro One officials who seemed to be pushing for a sale.

"It felt like we were hearing from a high-pressure appliance salesman who was saying, 'Buy today or miss out,'" Hanchet said.

He wants PDI kept in public hands.

"It's about the community retaining control - without sending the profits out of our community," he said.

Gord Halsey, who worked for Ontario Hydro in the 1980s and recently earned an MA in sustainability studies at Trent University, said councillors aren't listening to citizens.

"It's incumbent on you to listen to taxpayers before making a decision," he said.

Former city councillor Glenn Pagett spoke and told councillors he thinks hydro rates will skyrocket if PDI is sold - and it will force seniors out of their homes.

"I'm telling you right now - we're on the wrong page," he said.

Coun. Keith Riel, who opposes the sale, said he rejected the consultant's report "because it's skewed, biased and lacks information."

He said the utility belongs to "every man, woman and child in Peterborough", and he doesn't want it sold - no matter what a consultant says.

Yet consultant Ben Grunfeld told councillors that they can expect to receive more in a deal than the utility's book value of $89.7 million. He said buyers are paying up to 1 1/2 times the book value of utilities, in these deals.

"If you get an offer, I think you will get well above book value," he said.

Coun. Dan McWilliams apologized to Grunfeld for "some of the accusations" made at the meeting.

He said it's unfair to disparage the firm's report.

"And until we have all the information, we can't make a decision," he said.

JKovach@postmedia.com
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[Peterborough This Week]
Councillor calls for improved public engagement during Peterborough Distribution Inc. discussion
Peterborough This Week - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:Jamie Steel

Ad Value:$82
Reach: 47038
PETERBOROUGH — In an effort to better inform the public about any potential sale of Peterborough's electricity distribution company, City staff have been directed to report back to council with a comprehensive community engagement plan.

Monday (Sept. 12) night, members of the public once again flocked to Market Hall to offer their insights about the possible sale of Peterborough Distribution Inc. (PDI), the City of Peterborough's local electricity distribution company. This was the public's opportunity to speak to council about the presentation provided by Navigant Consulting at the committee of the whole meeting the previous Tuesday.

As negotiations with Hydro One continue about possibly selling PDI, the distribution branch of Peterborough Utilities, council decided to hire the consulting firm at a cost of $30,000 to provide an overview of the local utility as well as the energy sector as a whole. If an offer is presented, Navigant will also review the proposal and report back to council with their analysis.

Councillor Diane Therrien, who has remained outspoken in her call for more public participation on the matter, moved to have staff report back to council with a comprehensive community engagement plan to better include the people of Peterborough, Lakefield and Norwood in the process moving forward.

"We need to get proactive in how we are engaging people in this issue," she told her peers, encouraging them to support the preparation of a plan to include all Peterborough constituents.

"They feel like they're being intentionally excluded," she said after the meeting, noting the public meeting in March and the brief period for written comments seemed to have been the extent of public engagement in the matter thus far, not including the most recent meetings.

"I'm trying to get things in movement again, to have an ongoing source of information," said Coun. Therrien.

"It (public engagement) has been lacking and people are rightfully frustrated."

After discussion and clarification about what council had already approved, as far as process is concerned, Coun. Therrien's amendment was carried.

Although Coun. Therrien and other councillors have said public meetings are not the best way to engage the public, more than a dozen citizens spoke about the issue at Monday's meeting, all of whom were opposed to a possible sale.

Kathryn Langley, a retired teacher, said she believes in public services and chose to speak on the matter in support of local sovereignty. Sheila Nabigon-Howlett agreed, telling councillors they should listen to the people and maintain public ownership of the utility, rather than sell it and be faced with unknown consequences in the future.

Those unknown consequences seemed to be the basis for Steve Barker's opposition to any proposed sale to Hydro One. He said while the City has been offered examples of what the company has offered in similar recent transactions, there's no information for what would happen five years down the road.

"We know what we have. We know right now what we've got. Why would we want to go and crawl into bed with the devil? This doesn't make sense," he told council.

Fred Hahn, president of CUPE Ontario, reminded council of the Environics Research poll conducted in April that showed 93 per cent of Peterborough residents surveyed opposed the sale of PDI to private investors.

While the firm is routinely asked to conduct these kind of reviews, council heard Monday that Navigant does not always make recommendations to municipalities, as could be the case for Peterborough.

"There are occasions when we make recommendations to councils but, more often than not, because of the complexity (of other factors relating to municipal government), we don't make recommendations," said Benjamin Grunfeld,

Their presentation, which he says is independent and unbiased, is their view of the industry based on information available through public sources.

When questioned about why the statistics included in the presentation, specifically the return on equity noted on page five of the report, didn't line up with other numbers offered by members of the public, Grunfeld told council Navigant received their numbers from publicly available sources, including the Ontario Energy Board.

The numbers can be calculated and read differently, he said.

With respect to the other financial information included in the report, the annual revenue of PDI (as of Dec. 31, 2015) was $15,396,137. The net income was $1,600,702 and the total asset value was $89,788,796.

When asked for clarification, Grunfeld noted the book value of the utility is different than the total asset value. He also said buyers of electrical utilities are often paying more than 1.5 times the book value of the utility in part because of the lower cost of capital required.

While not every answer posed by the public or council was definitively answered through the presentation, councillors thanked Grunfeld and his peers at Navigant for their time and effort in the matter.

Councillor Gary Baldwin, who has indicated he's leaning against a sale of PDI, said the report provided a framework for him to refer to if an offer does come forward.

"Most people know how I stand on the pending and possible sale of PDI," he told his peers and Grunfeld.

"In terms of the report, I think it was a good report, a good starting point… I want to thank you for that knowledge you gave me, personally."

Coun. Baldwin's ward mate, Keith Riel, was less impressed and did not want to even accept the report for information, calling it skewed.

He also emphasized the necessity of electricity and his belief that it should remain under public control, both locally and across the province.
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[The Chatham Daily News]
C-K seeks answers on gas merger; Sulman enters motion asking for task force
The Chatham Daily News - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:Trevor Terfloth

Ad Value:$256
Reach: 15320 Page: A1 / Front
After a recent announcement on the purchase of Union Gas' parent company, Spectra Energy, Chatham-Kent councillors want to ensure the head office and its jobs remain in the area.

Chatham Coun. Doug Sulman entered a successful motion during

Monday's meeting asking that a task force be created, along with the mayor writing to the premier, minister of energy and the Ontario Energy Board concerning the impact.

Last week, the $37-billion deal was announced that would see Calgarybased energy giant Enbridge Inc. buy Houston-based Spectra Energy Corp.

Although Enbridge Gas Distribution, headquartered in Toronto, is part of Enbridge, Union Gas will continue to operate as a distinct

business unit after the merger is completed in the first quarter of next year.

However, Sulman said he wants the municipality to be proactive, given the importance of the jobs to the community.

"Union Gas is our biggest privatesector employer," he said after the meeting. "This hasn't been the first time there has been either a takeover or purchase proposed. "When you've got two companies that do the same thing, obviously you have a concern."

Sulman said one Union Gas job affects six other jobs, such as those selling goods and services. He added the impact goes beyond the local economy.

"The people at Union Gas contribute enormously to the social fabric of Chatham-Kent too," he said.

The Union Gas brand remained intact under previous owners Westcoast Energy and Duke Energy, from which Spectra Energy was created when Duke Energy decided to split its electricity and natural gas businesses nearly 10 years ago.

Sulman said the task force would investigate the potential impact of the latest development and take any necessary action.

"We are a community that has lost a lot of jobs as the auto downturn occurred in manufacturing," he said. "Ten years before that we lost jobs in the food processing business ... We've got to sit down and do what we can to protect the economic base in the community."

-With files from Ellwood Shreve TTerfloth@postmedia.com Twitter.com/DailyNewsTT
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[The Globe and Mail]
Investors swoon over green equities; Leaders in this sector are poised to grow with expanding demand, advisers say, as institutional investors ditch oil and coal and other climate-change-inducing industries
The Globe and Mail - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Neutral
Byline:JOEL SCHLESINGER

Ad Value:$23,781
Reach: 309154 Page: B3
Green equities often take a back seat in investment portfolios. But they are increasingly de rigueur among institutional investors who are divesting themselves of climate-changeinducing industries such as oil, gas and coal.

Although the selection of investments in wind and solar power and other so-called clean technologies is better than even just a few years ago, it still pales in comparison to the industry it aims to replace. That means investors should be able to find leaders in this sector that are poised to grow with expanding demand, says Tom Konrad, editor of AltEnergyStocks.com in New York.

"The one thing to point out about the whole divestment movement is that the number and size of investments that foundations and funds are moving out of is creating a pool of money much larger than the substitute: clean-tech," he says.

"So if even a tenth of this pool is put into green investments, it could cause the prices of those investments to skyrocket."

But not all clean-tech investments are equal. Here are a few to consider.

TransAlta Renewables Inc.

This company was spun out by its parent firm, TransAlta Corp., a major electricity provider, to focus solely on production of renewable energy. Its assets include 18 wind facilities with a 19th being added in Quebec, and 13 small hydro facilities across Canada and the United States.

It's "a major player in the alternate energy sector and Canada's largest wind energy producer," says Stephen Whipp, managing director of responsible asset management at Leede Jones Gable Inc. in Victoria.

Since its inception, TransAlta Renewables has produced steady income with dividend growth of about 25 per cent. Like many income oriented companies, however, it is sensitive to rising interest rates that affect its bottom line and ability to pay a competitive yield.

Pattern Energy Group Inc.

Listed in both the U.S. and Canada, Pattern is one of the larger players among renewable income investments in the U.S., referred to as yieldcos. The industry recently hit a rough patch as less conservatively run yieldcos benefitting from growing investor demand struggled to remain profitable amid expectations of rising dividend yields.

Among the notable firms to crash and burn is SunEdison Inc., now valued at about five cents down from its peak price of more than $30 a share in mid-2015. As one of the larger and more conservatively run yieldcos, Pattern has been able to buy stressed assets from firms such as SunEdison while still paying a yield north of 5 per cent.

"There is some leverage involved, so there is interest rate risk," Mr. Konrad says, "but Pattern is a very conservative investment, which is what I like about it."

Hannon Armstrong Sustainable Infrastructure Capital Inc. This New York Stock Exchangelisted company separates itself from other income earners in the clean-tech space by financing projects rather than owning assets. "They're financing cleantech and demonstrating the net benefits of taking that approach," says Cary Krosinsky, sustainability adviser with RLP Wealth Advisors LLP in New York, and a lecturer at Brown, Yale and Concordia universities. "The downside is the company has done really well, so it may be at a valuation peak."

Offering a dividend yield of about 5 per cent, Hannon Armstrong still likely makes sense for those seeking steady income.

Renewable Energy Group Inc. A global leader in production of biodiesel fuel, Renewable Energy Group is weathering the storm of low oil prices that has dampened demand for alternative fuels.

Because of the way subsidies and regulations work, "a certain amount of biodiesel still has to be sold," Mr. Konrad says. For example, in the U.S., regulations stipulate that 36 billion gallons of renewable fuel must be blended into domestic fuels annually by 2022.

Among the largest players in its respective industry, Renewable Energy Group has "been able to consolidate its position" and should remain profitable even if oil remains low, he says.

"If the cycle turns, the company has potential for humongous growth," and would particularly benefit from a supply-anddemand pinch where demand for biodiesel outstrips supply. But he cautions its upside may also be limited by an eventual lack of supply on the input side, in which rising feedstock prices, for example, eat into profitability.

GreenPower Motor Co. Inc. The Toronto-listed firm may be ideal for investors seeking to add a little more risk to their portfolios in exchange for potential high growth, says Mr.

Whipp.

This company has moved from offering one model of electric vehicle (EV) bus to offering several, including a double-decker. The Vancouver-based company is still in its early stages, and a lot can go wrong as it seeks to win larger contracts, he warns. Moreover, it still relies on other companies' facilities to manufacture. But it plans to increase its capacity.

Most importantly, GreenPower is selling buses - albeit in small numbers - and is an early industry leader. "Like most early industry adopters, it is usually the first to prove reliability," and in turn, profitability, Mr. Whipp says.

What about ETFs?

Exchange-traded funds offer diversified exposure to the cleantech sector at low cost. But Mr. Krosinsky does not favour them.

"They are not well-suited to the clean-tech space," he says. "If you're investing in the whole space, you're picking up too many losers that [may] go belly up."

Moreover, clean-tech ETFs tend to have small market capitalization, are less liquid than individual securities and often pay a lower yield, Mr. Konrad says.

Even one of the largest ETFs in this sector, the PowerShares Cleantech Portfolio, has a market capitalization of only about $74million and a dividend yield of less than 1 per cent.

Another, Global X YieldCo Index ETF (YLCO), yields more than 5 per cent but has a market cap of about $7-million. "It follows companies that are like Pattern Energy Group," Mr. Konrad says.

But, he adds, he prefers individual stocks to ETFs such as Global X because it is so small. "You actually get more liquidity buying Pattern" for a similar yield.
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Kitchener's natural gas bills to jump $75 due to cap and trade
Waterloo Region Record - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Catherine Thompson, Record staff

Ad Value:$2,769
Reach: 63465 Page: B1
Kitchener residents will see their natural gas bills increase by at least $75 a year under a new cap-and-trade emissions control system introduced by the provincial Liberals, city councillors heard Monday.

The provincial government announced in May that it would be introducing a cap and trade policy that is meant to fight climate change by putting a price on greenhouse gas emissions.

Basically, the system places a cap on the emissions Ontario businesses can produce.

Efficient businesses that produce fewer emissions than the cap can sell their emission credits on the open market; businesses that produce more emissions than the cap allows can buy those credits to offset their emissions.

The system creates a financial incentive to reduce emissions. Businesses can also offset their emissions by investing in projects that reduce emissions, such as tree planting, carbon capture and so on.

All natural gas utilities in Ontario are required to be part of the new system, and customers of other gas utilities will face similar increases to those in Kitchener, Chris Persaud of Kitchener Utilities told Kitchener's finance committee.

Kitchener Utilities staff said the utility expects it will need to buy 508,000 emission credits each year for the natural gas used by its customers. It will pass on the cost of buying those credits to its customers, Persaud said.

"This is a flow-through cost similar to HST," he said.

The new system is to launch next March, when companies can start to bid on emissions credits.

The system as a whole is expected to cost the utility $10 million to $12 million a year, based on an anticipated floor auction price of just over $18 per tonne of emissions.

"There is a risk of it being substantially higher," Persaud said, since the $18 is a starting price.

Kitchener Utilities estimates it will need to charge an extra 3.5 cents per cubic metre of gas used to cover that cost. That works out to about an extra $75 a year for an average residential customer - about a 10 per cent increase on the overall bill, Persaud said. Most of the money collected will flow through to the province, which is expected to generate an extra $1.9 billion a year for a "green investment fund" to pay for incentives to help shift the province to a lower-carbon economy.

Kitchener councillors stressed that the increase is not something the city is imposing, but is mandated by the province. Several worried how the poor and those on fixed incomes will cope.

"Anyone that has a respect for science knows that climate change is a dire issue," said Coun. Scott Davey. "I absolutely believe we need to address it. … My problem with this is the way it's being implemented. … This is equivalent to the City of Kitchener raising taxes seven to eight per cent."

Coun. Paul Singh called the new system a "tax grab" and said "it just exacerbates the problem of the average citizen having to continue to pay more and more," especially when people already are facing increases in other utilities such as hydro and water.

Mayor Berry Vrbanovic said he, too, was "not thrilled" with the increase, but added that climate change is a real concern for people. "We as a country need to start dealing with climate change and GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions, and there's a cost associated with that."

Council was considering the new system this week because Kitchener is one of only two Ontario municipalities - the other is Kingston - that own their own gas utility. Council will vote on new gas rates in October, and the costs of the new cap and trade system will begin showing up on customers' bills in January 2017, as an increase in the gas delivery cost.

Utility staff will come back to council in early 2017 with details on how it will implement the new cap and trade system.

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[Today's Farmer]
Policy needs to be bolder, says think tank
Today's Farmer - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Ad Value:$201
Page: A33
The federal and provincial agriculture ministers need to be far bolder than their past five-year policies, say agriculture economists with Agri-Food Economic Systems Research.

"The risk is that the dialogue and ultimate agreement will be both too small in ambition and too safe in its scope ", says Al Mussell, co-author of the policy note.

"Another five years of modest change in (Growing Forward) policy and programming is unlikely to provide a stable base for industry growth; there are just too many big changes coming at us".

Among them are "demographic trends in farms and food processing (that) will pressure program design, marked uncertainties (that) characterize markets and trade, and agriculture (that) will be impacted by, and can be a solutions provider for, climate change mitigation commitments ," the team says in a news release.

Co-author Douglas Hedley, who retired after a career as a top federal agriculture department policy advisor, says "when federal and provincial governments are already underway with carbon tax or cap and trade initiatives, we cannot talk blithely about beneficial management practices and environmental farm plans."

"It will become increasingly difficult to avoid the reality of differential demands for business risk management programming.

"Moreover, the new policy framework will need to accommodate and prepare for new trade agreements, with an acknowledgment that these may not roll out exactly as anticipated, and that other measures may be required to stimulate growth ," he writes.

Another member of the team is Bob Seguin, who served as top policy advisor in the

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and was chief executive for the now-defunct George Morris Centre.

Mussel was senior economist at the George Morris Centre.
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[National Post]
'Keystoning' Energy East
National Post - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Markham Hislop

Ad Value:$9,198
Reach: 159480 Page: FP7
Is the National Energy Board review of the Energy East pipeline process broken, after three panel members resigned last week? Not in the least. But getting us all to believe that it's broken is part of the ecoactivist strategy known as "Keystoning."

I first began covering the "Keystoning" of Energy East in July, when American ecoactivist Bill McKibben joined the attacks on the TransCanada project, which is meant to carry 1.1 million barrels a day of Alberta crude oil east across Canada to New Brunswick for overseas export. As I wrote then, Keystoning "involves celebrity opponents (think: actors Robert Redford, Daryl Hannah), massive protests, civil disobedience, and social media campaigns" to rally the antioilsands troops. It's the political equivalent of Shock and Awe: Relentlessly attacking the target until it's reduced to rubble.

Here's how McKibben describes the process, named after the strategy he devised to oppose the Keystone XL pipeline, also proposed by TransCanada, and rejected last fall by President Barack Obama: "Every coal mine, every frack well, every oil export terminal … all of them are being met with strict, strict resistance," McKibben said in an interview earlier this year. "There's people arrested every day now around the country taking on these infrastructure projects, the kind of spread of civil disobedience like we've never seen."

On Friday, the NEB panellists resigned after "critics had demanded two of three panel members quit when it emerged they had privately discussed the project last year with former Quebec Premier Jean Charest, who was working for TransCanada as a consultant at the time," as Reuters reported. That's putting it politely.

Critics actually went into full-throated, hyperbolic Keystoning, complete with outlandish and inaccurate claims.

This bombast from Keith Brooks of Environmental Defence is a typical example:

"It's clear the process is broken … It makes no sense to assess Energy East, the longest and largest tar sands pipeline ever, using a process everyone agrees is deeply flawed … It's time for the Prime Minister to listen to the concerns of Canadians from across the country and take immediate legislative action to overhaul the broken and discredited regulator."

This is utter nonsense.

It's far from "clear" the NEB process is "broken" or "discredited." I have interviewed many experts who believe it is actually quite sound, respected around the world as a model of exemplary oil and gas regulation.

But Canada's energy regulator does have a problem that is not of its making and one that can be laid squarely at the feet of the previous Conservative government.

Gaetan Caron, is a former NEB chair and now a fellow at the University of Calgary's School of Public Policy (he also advises an intervener in the Energy East hearing, and was therefore unable to answer direct questions about that project). He notes that the NEB is a quasi-judicial body that is independent of the federal government, and set up under federal legislation with a fairly specific mandate.

That mandate is to review the technical merits of energy infrastructure projects that fall within its purview. The NEB is responsible for the "hard" side of the review process, explains Caron: the evidence, the facts, the figures, the analysis, the consultations with parties directly affected by the project, and the legal arguments from all sides.

But pipeline reviews also require a dialogue about the "soft" side of specific projects: the politics, the social engagement, the GHG emissions, First Nations issues, etc. These matters are the responsibility of the Canadian, provincial and territorial governments, Caron says.

The Harper Tories were uninterested in the soft side of the process. They declared

themselves 100 per cent in favour of Enbridge's Northern Gateway and Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain Expansion pipeline projects from Alberta to the West Coast. The Federal Court of Appeal highlighted this lack of consultation when it overturned the NEB's Northern Gateway approval in June because the Conservatives failed in Canada's constitutional "duty to consult" First Nations.

And the Harper government's unwillingness to deal with the "soft" side of Northern Gateway gave eco-activists an opportunity. Without a government-led process to address "soft" concerns, opponents Keystoned the NEB "hard" review process with all their protests over the environment, the politics, the social issues and First Nations issues. They flooded panels with thousands of interveners, showed up by the busload to overwhelm public meetings, and did everything within their power to discredit and break the process. Now, they are reviving their tactics to Keystone the Energy East review. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau must act quickly. He must set up a governmentled process to address those "soft" pipeline review concerns and get them out of the NEB review.

Natural Resource Minister Jim Carr told me in an interview that his government intends to consult widely and extensively about pipelines before it makes the final decision on a project. Now is the time. Let's see Trudeau show real leadership on this issue, before Energy East ends up becoming the next victim of Keystoning.

Markham Hislop is the Vancouver-based publisher of The American Energy News.
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[Ottawa Citizen]

NEB panel resignations create uncertainty over Energy East
Ottawa Citizen - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Dan Healing

Ad Value:$2,236
Reach: 114846 Page: B11
Doubts are growing over the fate of the Energy East Pipeline after members of the National Energy Board panel examining the project resigned, leaving questions over how the review will proceed.

Analyst Dirk Lever of AltaCorp Capital in Calgary said Monday the pipeline regulatory process has become so "murky" and "messy" due to political pressure that it's difficult to say whether any pipeline approval can be assured.

"I think everyone just wants to see some clarity on it," he said.

On Friday, the National Energy Board announced that the three people overseeing the review of Energy East were stepping down following complaints that two of them met last year with former Quebec premier Jean Charest, a consultant for developer Trans-Canada at the time, to discuss the pipeline.

The regulator also said board chairman Peter Watson and vicechairwoman Lyne Mercier will not be involved in choosing members of the new panel in order to avoid

"an apprehension of bias."

NEB spokeswoman Sarah Kiley said Monday a temporary chairperson will select members of the new panel, who will decide whether the review will resume in Montreal from where it left off or start all over. The hearings began last month in Saint John, N.B. The NEB is still aiming to have a decision on the $15.7-billion Energy East pipeline project by March 18, 2018, she added.

"However, our key goal as always is to have a meaningful and thorough review so if we need to ask for more time that's certainly something we'll consider."

TransCanada, the proponent behind Energy East, has said it remains committed to the project. Spokesman Tim Duboyce said construction would begin shortly after approval, with the goal of shipping oil in 2021.

The 4,500-kilometre pipeline would ship about 1.1 million barrels of oil per day from Alberta and Saskatchewan to Eastern Canada refineries and a marine terminal in Saint John, N.B.
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[London Free Press]
Enery East Pipeline fatefartherin doubt
London Free Press - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Dan Healing

Ad Value:$3,717
Reach: 70995 Page: N7
Doubts are growing over the fate of the Energy East Pipeline after members of the National Energy Board panel examining the project resigned, leaving questions over howthe reviewwill proceed.

Analyst Dirk Lever of AltaCorp Capital in Calgary said Monday the pipeline regulatory process has become so " murky " and " messy " due to political pressure that it ' s difficult to say whether any pipeline approval can be assured.

" I think everyone just wants to see some clarity on it ," he said. " Certainly from industry, they just want to know what they have to do ." On Friday, the National Energy Board announced the three people overseeing the review of Energy East were stepping down following complaints that two of them met last year with former Quebec premier Jean Charest, a consultant for developer TransCanada at the time, to discuss the pipeline.

The regulator also said board chairperson Peter Watson and vice-chairperson Lyne Mercier will not be involved in choosing members of the new panel in order to avoid " an apprehension of bias ." NEB spokesperson Sarah Kiley said Monday a temporary chairperson will select members of the newpanel, who will decide whether the reviewwill resume in Montreal from where it left off or start over. The hearings began last month in Saint John, N. B.

" It ' s very much dependent on when the new panel is appointed and, of course, they will have a number of decisions to make in front of them, so they will have to revisit the decisions made by the previous panel ," Kiley said.

The NEB still is aiming to have a decision on the $15.7-billion Energy East pipeline project by March 18,2018, she added.

" However, our key goal as always is to have a meaningful and thorough review so if we need to ask for more time that ' s certainly something we ' ll consider ." TransCanada, the proponentbehind Energy East, has said it remains committed to the project. Spokesperson Tim Duboyce said construction would begin shortly after approval, with the goal of shipping oil in 2021.

When the project was proposed to potential shippers in 2013, TransCanada anticipated oil would start flowing in 2017.

In a report released Monday, credit rating agency DBRS said Canada has just enough pipeline capacity now to handle current production but it will experience a " takeaway gap " of1.5 millionbarrels a day by 2030 if production growth meets forecasts.

Report author Ram Vadali said the NEB resignations represent a new hurdle for pipeline projects but he believes they will eventually be approved, if only because their benefits to the economy are numerous.

" It is possible. The framework is in place ," he said. " It ' s just howlong will these discussions take place ? We ' re optimistic, cautiously optimistic, that these temporary stoppages will be overcome ." However, Monday, Scotiabank analyst Robert Hope said the project ' s already poor prospects have worsened.

In a note to clients, Hope said he thinks the chance the project will be built has fallen to 25 per cent from 33 per cent, adding that he believes fervent opposition in Montreal makes it politically unpalatable for the federal Liberals to approve it because that may endanger the 33 seats they gained in Quebec during the 2015 election.
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[The Globe and Mail]
Pipeline delays pose threat to firms' credit ratings
The Globe and Mail - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:JEFFREY JONES

Ad Value:$14,000
Reach: 309154 Page: B5
Ceaseless delays in building pipelines now threaten credit ratings in Canada's energy transportation sector.

New complications to old debates in recent days have added to already great uncertainty about the industry's ability to get oil to overseas markets.

Bond-rating agency DBRS Ltd. said further setbacks could heap pressure on credit quality for pipeline companies, which would raise their debt-servicing costs.

A steady rotation of political and environmental controversy, shelved projects and shifting supply and demand fundamentals are raising concerns about the sector's expansion prospects and point to higher construction costs and even longer lead times for long-haul oil and gas pipelines, DBRS said.

"Credit ratings could come under pressure for companies with deteriorating business risk profiles because of slower growth and diminishing market share," the agency said in a report. It said the situation could increase risks that some shippers will not renew transport contracts when current ones expire, as the capacity won't be needed because of slumping oil prices.

On Friday, the regulatory process for the $15.7-billion Energy East pipeline project was thrown into disarray when the National Energy Board members hearing the application stepped down amid opponents' allegations of pro-industry bias.

The panel members recused themselves after revelations that two of them had a private meeting last year with former Quebec premier Jean Charest, who at the time was a paid consultant to project proponent TransCanada Corp. Energy East, which would move 1.1 million barrels of oil sands crude a day to New Brunswick and on to export markets, already faced stiff opposition from various Quebec mayors and First Nations.

It's unclear how long the Energy East hearing process will be delayed. Lawyers for one of the complainants, Transition Initiative Kenora, argued that the new panel, once appointed, should go back to square one because the perception of bias has tainted 21/2 years of proceedings.

The DBRS analysis was in the works before last week's regulatory drama, said Ram Vadali, the lead DBRS analyst on the report. But the machinations highlight the struggles the industry faces in trying to proceed with export projects.

"We are looking at it more from an economic and credit standpoint, rather than the process that's in front of the NEB and how they are approaching the various conflicts of interest situations that developed on Friday," Mr. Vadali said.

Other projects, such as Enbridge Inc.'s Northern Gateway line to the Pacific Coast, are years behind schedule and face an uncertain future. The oil industry has long blamed perpetual pipeline posturing for deep discounts in the price of oil sands crude, which has hurt bottom lines and, executives say, contributed to a flight of capital to other parts of the world.

Meanwhile, DBRS pointed to increasing competitiveness in potential export markets, especially with U.S. oil now freed for shipment to overseas destinations after years of restriction.

That could also hurt prospects for future Canadian crude exports to the United States, as Canada's main market becomes more self-sufficient and a growing market rival.

Meanwhile, hopes for an export-focused liquefied natural gas industry in British Columbia have been repeatedly pushed back as the economic viability of massive plants is questioned.

It is not clear how soon credit could be hit by pipeline delays, Mr. Vadali said. So far, pipeline companies have maintained their high investment-grade credit ratings despite the twoyear energy sector downturn due to their conservative balance sheets and regulated, fee-based revenues. However, growth prospects will stall if delays in building new projects persist.

Indeed, last week's Enbridge Inc. bid for U.S.-based Spectra Energy will remove some of that risk for that company by diversifying operations, analysts said.
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[The Globe and Mail]
Court rejects First Nation's claim that rights were violated in NEB review
The Globe and Mail - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:SHAWN McCARTHY

Ad Value:$10,437
Reach: 309154 Page: B5
The Federal Court of Appeal has rejected a challenge by a Vancouver-area First Nation, which argued its rights were violated by the National Energy Board during the agency's review of Kinder Morgan Inc.'s Trans Mountain expansion project.

In the decision posted last week, the court declared that the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation of Burnaby had numerous opportunities to engage in consultations prior to and during the hearing process, but failed to take them.

The aboriginal community is located near Kinder Morgan's export terminal at the end of the Trans Mountain pipeline from Alberta, which the company proposes to triple in capacity to nearly 900,000 barrels a day.

As a result, the number of tankers plying the Burrard Inlet would grow from five a month to 34, depending on market conditions.

The National Energy Board concluded in May that the project would be in Canada's national interest despite some environmental impacts and risks, and it recommended that federal cabinet should approve the pipeline expansion, subject to 157 conditions.

Earlier this year, the Liberal government appointed a separate panel to conduct further consultations with First Nations and other communities that would be affected by the project, and has promised to make a decision by Christmas.

Opposition from First Nations and local political leaders threatens to derail not only the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion but TransCanada Corp.'s proposed Energy East project, which would carry 1.1 million barrels a day of western crude to eastern refineries and an export terminal in New Brunswick.

In a report Monday, bond-rating agency DBRS Ltd. said a lack of export pipeline capacity could throttle growth in the oil and gas industry. "Accessing export markets is crucial for Canada's energy future and developing pipeline infrastructure continues to be the key to unlocking the economic potential of Canada's vast energy resources," the agency said.

The Tsleil-Waututh has opposed the expansion project since its inception and challenged the NEB review process, arguing it failed to recognize the community's jurisdiction and or its rights to government-togovernment consultation.

In its ruling, the appeal court suggests the First Nation must engage in the prescribed process - including consultations with project proponents and federal review agencies - before they can assert a failure to consult by government.

However, the court also noted the federal cabinet will have to assess whether its duty to consult was met before reaching a final decision on the pipeline proposal. It said the Tsleil-Waututh can revisit the issue - arguing the same principles - once the entire process is completed.

Kinder Morgan (KMI)

Close: $22.40 (U.S.), up 28C/
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[National Post]
Clouds gather over Energy East pipeline development; Political Pressure
National Post - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Dan Healing

Ad Value:$3,432
Reach: 159480 Page: FP2
Doubts are growing over the fate of the Energy East Pipeline after members of the National Energy Board panel examining the project resigned, leaving questions over how the review will proceed.

Analyst Dirk Lever of AltaCorp Capital in Calgary said Monday the pipeline regulatory process has become so "murky" and "messy" due to political pressure that it's difficult to say whether any pipeline approval can be assured. "I think everyone just wants to see some clarity on it," he said. "Certainly from industry, they just want to know what they have to do."

On Friday, the NEB announced that the three people overseeing the review of Energy East were stepping down following complaints that two of them met last year with former Quebec premier Jean Charest, a consultant for developer TransCanada at the time, to discuss the pipeline.

The regulator also said board chairman Peter Watson and vice-chairwoman Lyne Mercier will not be involved in choosing members of the new panel in order to avoid "an apprehension of bias."

NEB spokeswoman Sarah Kiley said Monday a temporary chairperson will select members of the new panel, who will decide whether the review will resume in Montreal from where it left off or start all over. The hearings began last month in Saint John, N.B. The NEB is still aiming to have a decision on the $15.7-billion Energy East pipeline project by March 18, 2018, she added.

On Monday, Scotiabank analyst Robert Hope said already poor prospects of the development seeing the light of day have worsened. Hope said he thinks the chance the project will be built has fallen to 25 per cent from 33 per cent.
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[Toronto Star]
The outlook looks bleak for divisive Energy East; Chances that pipeline will be built fell after panel resigned last week, CIBC analyst says
Toronto Star - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:The Canadian Press

Ad Value:$17,453
Reach: 361323 Page: B6
A bank analyst says the chance that the Energy East pipeline project will be built has fallen to 25 per cent from 33 per cent after members of a regulatory panel were forced to resign last week.

CIBC analyst Robert Hope said in a note to clients that poor prospects have gotten worse for the controversial $15.7-billion pipeline, which would bring about 1.1-million barrels of oil per day from Alberta and Saskatchewan to Eastern Canada refineries and a marine terminal in New Brunswick.

On Friday, the National Energy Board announced its three Energy East panellists had recused themselves following complaints that two of them met with former Quebec premier Jean Charest, a consultant for developer TransCanada at the time, last year to discuss the pipeline.

The Calgary-based regulator also said board chairman Peter Watson and vice-chairwoman Lyne Mercier will not be involved in choosing a new panel to resume hearings at a later date to avoid "an apprehension of bias."

NEB spokeswoman Sarah Kiley says a new panel will be chosen by a temporary NEB chair from a roster of board members slated to grow with new temporary appointments made by the federal government. She says the new board members are necessary to ensure enough panellists are available to serve who are bilingual.

Kiley added the regulator still hopes to finish its review process by its current deadline of March 18, 2018, but that timeline may be extended if necessary to ensure a thorough review.

Analyst Dirk Lever of AltaCorp Capital in Calgary says the pipeline regulatory process has become so "murky" and "messy" due to political pressure that it's difficult to say that any pipeline approval can be assured.
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[thestar.com]
A political doubleheader unfolding in two Montreal courtrooms: Hébert
thestar.com - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Chantal Hébert(
https://author.thestar.com/»<https://author.thestar.com/content/thestar/authors.h_bert_chantal.html>)
Reach: 999000
MONTREAL-For political junkies, a compelling double program is unfolding in Montreal courts this week. In one courtroom, the sponsorship scandal is coming back to life, and in another Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's undertaking of a new partnership with Canada's indigenous people is being put to a test.

More than a decade after justice John Gomery investigated the federal sponsorship program the Liberal insider he described in his final report as "a central figure in an elaborate kickback scheme" is having his day in court.

Jacques Corriveau is not the first individual to be charged in connection with the failed Liberal program designed to enhance Canada's visibility in Quebec but he is as close to an alleged mastermind of the scandal as one is likely to see on the stand.

Corriveau was a close ally of former prime minister Jean Chrétien and a driving force behind his two leadership bids. He is accused of having used his contacts to collect $8 million worth of kickbacks as a middleman in the distribution of sponsorship money.

But those who hope for titillating new revelations about how a program designed to shore up Canadian unity in Quebec ended up bringing the federal Liberal party to the brink of extinction in the province should not hold their breath. Corriveau's testimony to the Gomery commission featured frequent memory lapses. At the time, he put those down to age. He is now 83 years old.

Why does it matter? Among the handful of people caught so far in the police investigation's net, Corriveau is the biggest catch. After having seen its case against Mike Duffy in the more recent Senate spending scandal collapse in court the RCMP could use a win.

It may seem strange that a case involving a multibillion mega dam in northern British Columbia is being argued in Montreal but, for scheduling reasons, that is where the Federal Court of Appeal is hearing the latest First Nations challenge to the province's Site C project.

Earlier this summer, the federal government quietly issued two permits crucial to the construction of the dam and, in the process, dashed indigenous hopes that Trudeau would block the project.

The decision was released late in the afternoon of the last Friday in July - a window usually reserved for announcements that governments are hoping to bury. (As an aside, the news that the National Energy Board was scrapping its controversial Energy East panel and asking the government to craft a new one from scratch was also made public at the tail end of business hours last Friday.)

Over the weekend, Perry Bellegarde, the national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, told The Canadian Press that facilitating the completion of a project initially approved by the Harper government went against Trudeau's pledge to have a nation-to-nation relationship. The issue from his organization's perspective is the respect of treaty rights.

Why does it matter? Trudeau has made a lot of promises to Canada's indigenous people but this is the first time the rubber hits the road on a major energy project. The Liberal government will need a lot of aboriginal goodwill if Trudeau is to be able to claim that he has acquired a so-called social licence for one or more pipelines to be built over his tenure.

A decade ago, the sponsorship court case would have commanded the attention reserved for must-watch performances. But in the spirit of 2016, a court battle that finds Trudeau's indigenous-friendly government and some key First Nations allies on opposite sides of a major energy development issue is of much greater consequence.

A note in closing: A challenge to the Quebec government's legislative response to the federal Clarity Act was also scheduled to be heard in Quebec Superior Court this week but it was belatedly postponed for the umpteenth time late Monday afternoon. If there ever was any urgency to having the courts pronounce on whether the federal rules spelled out in the Clarity Act take precedence over the national assembly's insistence that it alone would be in the driver's seat of a future referendum on Quebec's political future, a 16-year wait to argue the case has taken care of it.
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[InsideTorontocom]
Clouds of uncertainty gather around Energy East

InsideTorontocom - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
CALGARY - Doubts are growing over the fate of the Energy East Pipeline after members of the National Energy Board panel examining the project resigned, leaving questions over how the review will proceed.

Analyst Dirk Lever of AltaCorp Capital in Calgary said Monday the pipeline regulatory process has become so "murky" and "messy" due to political pressure that it's difficult to say whether any pipeline approval can be assured.

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"It is possible. The framework is in place," he said. "It's just how long will these discussions take place? We're optimistic, cautiously optimistic, that these temporary stoppages will be overcome."

Not everyone shares those views, however.

On Monday, Scotiabank analyst Robert Hope said already poor prospects of the development seeing the light of day have worsened.

In a note to clients, Hope said he thinks the chance the project will be built has fallen to 25 per cent from 33 per cent, adding that he believes fervent opposition in Montreal makes it politically unpalatable for the federal Liberals to approve it because that may endanger the 33 seats they gained in Quebec during the 2015 election.

The 4,500-kilometre pipeline would ship about 1.1 million barrels of oil per day from Alberta and Saskatchewan to Eastern Canada refineries and a marine terminal in Saint John, N.B.

Follow @HealingSlowly on Twitter.

Note to readers: This is a corrected story. A previous version said Robert Hope was an analyst with CIBC.

By Dan Healing, The Canadian Press
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[www.nationalobserver.com]
After Dakota pipeline battle, Indigenous people say they share "unprecedented unity" | National Observer
www.nationalobserver.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
For Indigenous activists fighting pipelines across Canada, the following names are unforgettable: Energy East, Enbridge Northern Gateway, the Trans Mountain expansion.
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[edmontonjournal.com]
Graham Thomson: Energy East pipeline review delayed? Blame Harper | Edmonton Journal
edmontonjournal.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
To listen to experts today, you'd get the impression the Energy East pipeline project is pretty much buried — but not in the way proponents want the pipeline buried, if you know what I mean.
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[blackburnnews.com]
BlackburnNews.com - Bruce Power Produces Low Cost Electricity
blackburnnews.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Bruce Power says they continue to produce one of the lowest cost sources of clean electricity in Ontario.

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[business.financialpost.com]
How the Trudeau government can stop the 'Keystoning' of Energy East … if it really wants to | Financial Post
business.financialpost.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Is the National Energy Board review of the Energy East pipeline process broken, after three panel members resigned last week? Not in the least. But getting us all to believe that it's broken is part of the eco-activist strategy known as "Keystoning."
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[www.ctvnews.ca]
Uncertainty growing around Energy East Pipeline development | CTV News
www.ctvnews.ca - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Doubts are growing over the fate of the Energy East Pipeline after members of the National Energy Board panel examining the project resigned, leaving questions over how the review will proceed.
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[edmontonjournal.com]
Canada needs new energy pipelines, bond rating agency says | Edmonton Journal
edmontonjournal.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
Canadian energy will remain landlocked and the industry will lose potential overseas customers if the country doesn't build new pipelines, says a new DBRS report.
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[www.brandonsun.com]
Clouds of uncertainty gather around Energy East Pipeline development - Brandon Sun
www.brandonsun.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
A bank analyst says the chance that the Energy East Pipeline project will be built has fallen to 25 per cent from 33 per cent after members of a regulatory panel were forced to resign last week.
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[www.huffingtonpost.ca]
Energy East Pipeline's Odds Of Being Built Now Very Slim: CIBC
www.huffingtonpost.ca - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
A bank analyst says the chance that the Energy East pipeline project will be built has fallen to 25 per cent from 33 per cent after members of a regulatory panel were forced to resign last week.
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[theglobeandmail.com]
Court rejects First Nations claim rights were violated during TransMountain review; Federal Court of Appeal declared that the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation of Burnaby had

numerous opportunities to engage in the process
theglobeandmail.com - Mon Sep 12 2016, 1:16pm ET
Tone: Negative
Byline:Shawn McCarthy
Reach: 1188000
The Federal Court of Appeal has rejected a challenge by a Vancouver-area First Nation, which argued its rights were violated by the National Energy Board during the agency's review of Kinder Morgan Inc.'s TransMountain expansion project.

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(www.theglobeandmail.com<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/industry-news/energy-and-resources/court-rejects-first-nations-claim-rights-were-violated-during-transmountain-review/article31828341/>)
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[www.bnn.ca]
TransCanada's Energy East could be doomed as delays pile up, says analyst - Article - BNN
www.bnn.ca - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
COMMODITIES 2h ago TransCanada's Energy East could be doomed as delays pile up, says analyst John Gray, Producer, BNN Pipeline , The Canadian Press The recent shakeup at the National Energy Board's panel examining TransCanada's (TRP.TO 0.51%) proposed Energy East pipeline may have doomed the project, according to a new report from Scotiabank.
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[www.mcgilldaily.com]
Demonstrators protest Dakota pipeline outside U.S. consulate – The McGill Daily
www.mcgilldaily.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
On the morning of Thursday September 8, a crowd of roughly thirty people gathered outside the American consulate in Montreal to protest the controversial Dakota Access Pipeline project. Chanting "Water is life!" and "Leave it in the ground!", they expressed solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and their allies, who have been engaged in a non-violent struggle against the project since July.
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[www.energyglobal.com]
NEB makes Energy East and Eastern Mainline decisions
www.energyglobal.com - Mon Sep 12 2016
Tone: Neutral
The National Energy Board (NEB) has issued two decisions to address motions before a panel that are hearing the Energy East and Eastern Mainline Project applications.
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[Shoreline Beacon]
When will promised wind turbine audio tests be conducted ?
Shoreline Beacon - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Negative
Byline:Greg Schmalz

Ad Value:$224
Reach: 3769 Page: A8
This letter was sent to provincial officials and shared with the Shoreline Beacon by S. T. O. P (Saugeen Turbine Operation Policy .) Letter : It's September and no notice has been given to key property owners surrounding the Port Elgin turbine when Unifor will do its Section D audit test as you advised us and the Town of Saugeen Shores.

The closest receptor is to be notified. And to avoid what happened April 28,29, 2014 when Dean Fowler called off the testing mid-stream due to complaints being phoned in three days in a row, neighbours were to be given advance notice.

As a reminder Martin Ince, Unifor's project engineer, set up his Section D audit test on these dates. At 10 p. m. he recorded the max noise limit of 45 dB at only 60 -90 per cent power at 4 m /sec. The next night at 5m /sec he recorded 57 dB with peaks to 74dB. These were not birds or crickets or leaves in the trees -this was non compliant turbine noise.

Unifor's OMB hearing engineering consultant Jade Acoustics has had since March 2016 to do the "preliminary " practice testing which you advised was to take place.

The Director of Approvals made it a requirement that Unifor do Section D audit testing annually in the first two years being March 2013 to March 2015 but you have chosen not to enforce this requirement issued by the Director in writing to the public and to the municipality. Instead you insist that because she did not include this in the Certificate of Approval now done for every new turbine project in Ontario, you have the discretionary power to ignore her requirement and leave this critical community noise testing voluntary vs mandatory. As your reasoning is that you have seen no compelling evidence of noise levels being within 5 dB of the allowable limits of 45 dB. Clearly you have chosen to ignore the Apr. 28,29 and 30th Section D audit testing by Unifor.

As you can see by this weeks noise and health complaints, neighbours like the Murphys and Halls are still being impacted especially when the wind shifts and blows from the west through to north.

Greg Schmalz S. T. O. P.
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[Kingston Whig-Standard]
Wind opponents file appeal
Kingston Whig-Standard - Tue Sep 13 2016
Tone: Positive
Byline:Elliot Ferguson

Ad Value:$506
Reach: 21850 Page: A3
The group fighting a proposed wind energy project on Amherst Island has appealed to the federal environment minister to intervene in the case.

In a letter to Catherine McKenna, the federal environment and climate change minister, the Association to Protect Amherst Island (APAI) asked her to launch a federal environmental assessment of the cumulative impact of wind energy projects on Lake Ontario on the Atlantic migratory flyway and to examine if the projects comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Last week, APAI launched an appeal of an Environmental Review Tribunal ruling that dismissed the group's appeal of a 26-turbine energy project on the island.

In its appeal, the group argued its concern about the project's potential impact on wildlife and the environment had not been properly considered by the tribunal.

"The proposed Amherst Island wind project was approved by the Ontario government in August 2015 and an appeal to the

Environmental Review Tribunal concerning the impact on the health and the natural environment was recently dismissed," wrote APAI president Michele Le Lay.

"This is not an issue of being for or against renewable energy," Le Lay added. "It is to do with the placement of wind turbine facilities and how they impact migratory birds and other species at risk as international resources."

The request cited a recent study by Michael Hutchins of the American Bird Conservancy, which he said showed "wind turbines on the Great Lakes pose an unacceptably high risk to migratory birds and other wildlife." The study suggested setbacks for wind turbines from the Great Lakes shores be extended to 16 kilometres.

APAI's letter to McKenna included a map showing 13 existing and proposed wind energy projects on land and offshore between Prince Edward County and Cape Vincent, N.Y., that the group said would create an "impenetrable wall across the shore" of eastern Lake Ontario.

In addition to affecting migratory birds, the wind turbines would hurt populations of nesting ground birds, such as bobolink, eastern meadowlark, whip-poorwill and short-eared owls, as well as bald eagle and golden eagle, the letter stated.

"The government of Ontario has approved turbine projects which would blanket the entire northeast corner of the lake," Le Lay wrote. "We understand projects are also proposed on land in New York state along the shore in this area. It seems clear that the cumulative effect of all these proposed installations has not been fully considered in the context on international agreements concerning migratory birds. Numerous declining populations of migratory birds would be significantly affected." elferguson@postmedia.com
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