

John Bozzo

From: John Bozzo
Sent: February 13, 2017 5:42 PM
To: ##Clippings_Distribution_List
Subject: Fwd: CTV: New plan to reduce hydro bills being discussed by province

FYI.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

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Date: February 13, 2017 at 5:18:09 PM EST
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Subject: CTV: New plan to reduce hydro bills being discussed by province

New plan to reduce hydro bills being discussed by province

CTV News

Monday, February 13, 2017 | 4:48PM EST

Paul Bliss, Queen's Park Bureau Chief

Ontarians could soon see further reductions on their Hydro bills, CTV News Toronto has learned.

The Ontario liberal caucus is being presented today with details of a plan to lower hydro bills. Options being considered could deliver monthly bill reductions ranging from eight per cent up to 12 per cent on the top end, sources told Queen's Park Bureau Chief Paul Bliss.

However, no decisions on any of the details have been made at this time. The ultimate approvals will come from a vote of the Wynne government cabinet at a meeting this week or later this month.

Senior officials said the plan is likely to be three-pronged in terms of delivering relief to consumers. It will mainly focus on tackling the massive "global adjustment" fee which makes up approximately 85 per cent of the cost of electricity.

The global adjustment fee, which fluctuates based on per-kilowatt-hour cost, has been part of the equation since 2005. It was introduced to help the province pay for new power plants, for improvements to older ones as well as for investments in new energy projects.

Some of the options being discussed include:

- Immediate relief for all electricity consumers
- Added relief for rural customers who pay higher prices than those in cities.
- More support for all low-income customers who can't afford to pay bills

Much of the relief is expected to come from the treasury, meaning finding funds from tax revenue instead of hydro bill fees.

Cabinet will also consider eliminating a program that forced high-income earners to pay for discounts for hydro customers with low income.

Those decisions are also subject to a Liberal cabinet vote.

The Liberals have already taken eight per cent (Ontario's portion of the HST) off of Hydro bills. The rebate came into effect on Jan. 1, 2017 and is expected to save households about \$130 a year.

Currently Toronto households pay about \$147 a month.

Sources also said the government is still on track to balance its budget, despite the relief plan.