

John Bozzo

From: John Bozzo
Sent: March 27, 2017 8:48 AM
To: Brian Hewson; Ceiran Bishop; Christine Long; Corinne Carvalho; Debra Hazelton; Elisabeth DaSilva; John Bozzo; Julie Mitchell; June Colman; Karen Nunno; Ken Quesnelle; Lynne Anderson; Martine Band; Mary Anne Aldred; Nancy Mintz; Neil Brodie; Rosemarie Leclair; Sarah Branco; Veronica Mendes
Subject: FW: OEB Morning News Summary - Monday, March 27, 2017

Good morning,

Here is your OEB morning media summary for Monday, March 27.

Overview

Highlights of this morning's coverage include a story from the Toronto Sun about the cap-and-trade charge being included in the delivery line of the bill. Other coverage is primarily focused on the energy and the government and the Premier's approval ratings.

[A senior's struggle to root out elusive cap-and-trade charge](#)

Antonella Arturo of the Toronto Sun wrote an article that included a video interview with a senior who argues that cap-and-trade should not be included in the delivery charge and should be more accessible. The senior has written to the government and OEB about the charge and the article mentions the OEB directed her to a website where she could calculate her bill that turned out not to work. The OEB is mentioned throughout the article by the citizen and the reporter also refers to the OEB's cap and trade backgrounder that was released with the interim rates to breakdown the average costs. The article ends with a response from the OEB to a question about whether there is a reason why carbon fees are not a separate item on natural gas and electricity bills, which cites OEB messaging on why the charge is not broken out.

[Polling shows hydro was No. 1 concern in Ontario long before relief announced](#)

Allison Jones of The Canadian Press reported that the Ontario's government has learned from its own polling that the rising cost of hydro was people's top concern 10 months before the Liberals publicly acknowledged it and announced an eight-per-cent reduction on electricity bills. The government-commissioned polling from 2013 to 2016 shows increasing distress about hydro rates over months, even years before across-the-board relief was introduced.

[Toronto Hydro and the power of secrecy: analysis](#)

The Toronto Star provides an update on a request for information about Toronto Hydro's use of privatization consultants, which has been ongoing for 14-months. David Rider, the Star's city hall bureau chief has been trying to uncover the story about how they say Toronto Hydro Corp. is spending public money on consultants. Rider says he will continue to investigate this story, but there is no end in sight as some of his FOI requests have been denied.

[Northern Ontario being hit harder by natural gas hike](#)

Sudbury.com published a short online article about the recent QRAM announcement, focusing on Union Gas customer in the north who will see an increase of about \$50 annually. The OEB is mentioned in that it approved the rate increase last week.

Flagged For Discussion

- Toronto Sun article on cap-and-trade

Social Media

There are no major items of concern to report on social media this morning.

Jeff Blay

Communications and Digital Coordinator

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ENTERPRISE

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Toronto, ON M5G 2C2

From: Paul Crawford

Date: Monday, March 27, 2017 at 8:14 AM

To: Paul Crawford

Subject: Morning News Clippings - Monday, March 27, 2017

Please see the video file for Focus Ontario [here](#). Inappropriate remarks about OEB appointee discussed past the halfway mark.

Morning News Clippings

powered by: **infomart**

Date: Monday, March 27, 2017

Edited by: Paul Crawford (Paul.Crawford@ontarioenergyboard.ca)

Contact Editor

Clippings Summary

News - 38 Results



Consumers Just Want To Know Total Cost: Oeb

Toronto Sun - Mon Mar 27 2017

Tone: Neutral

Ad Value: \$2,438

Reach: 171076 **Page:** A4

The Toronto Sun asked the **Ontario EnergyBoard** whether there is a reason why

carbon fees are not a separate item on **natural gas** and **electricity** bills? And if so, what is it? n ...



Power companies seek public input; St. Thomas Energy and Entegrus looking for feedback ahead of merger application this spring

Times-Journal (St.Thomas) - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Byline: Jennifer Bieman

Ad Value: \$641

Reach: 8859 Page: A6

The proposed merger of St. Thomas **Energy** and Chatham-based Entegrus is pressing on, and now the public is getting the opportunity to comment as the companies vie for regulatory approval. The two utilities are hosting an information ...



Ameresco Partnership Assists London District Catholic School Board to Meet Climate Change Targets

finance.yahoo.com - Fri Mar 24 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

[Permalink](#)

Paul Crawford noted on Friday, March 24, 2017

OEB is mentioned.

Ameresco, Inc. (AMRC), a leading energy efficiency and renewable energy company, announced today that it is progressing on its energy savings project with the London District Catholic School Board (LDCSB) and helping the Board fulfill new climate ...



Polling shows hydro was No. 1 concern in Ontario long before relief announced | CTV News

www.ctvnews.ca - Mon Mar 27 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

[Permalink](#)

Ontario's government learned from its own polling that the rising cost of hydro was people's top concern 10 months before the Liberals publicly acknowledged it and announced an eight-per-cent reduction on electricity bills.



Partisan ads abuse of taxes

Toronto Star - Mon Mar 27 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Ad Value: \$3,166

Reach: 361323 Page: A10

In 2004, former Liberal premier Dalton McGuinty gave the provincial auditor general supreme oversight of government advertising. Unfortunately, Premier Kathleen Wynne felt too constrained by these regulations and watered them down in 2015. This ...



Cap & trade, hide & seek; Couple went through a 'rat's maze' to find out what Grit scheme really costs them

Toronto Sun - Mon Mar 27 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Antonella Artuso

Ad Value: \$5,621
Reach: 171076 **Page:** A4

Ontario residents shouldn't have to work their way through a "rat's maze" to figure out the **cap-and-trade** charge on their **natural gas** bills, Mississauga senior Muriel Chudiak says. Since the ...



Mission: Impossible

Toronto Sun - Mon Mar 27 2017
Tone: Neutral
Ad Value: \$1,529
Reach: 171076 **Page:** A1 / Front

Mississauga senior Muriel Chudiak wants Premier Kathleen Wynne to stop 'hiding' **cap-and-trade** charges on **energy** bills. All she's got is a runaround. Mission: Impossible



Toronto Hydro and the power of secrecy: analysis

thestar.com - Sat Mar 25 2017
Tone: Negative
Byline: David Rider
Reach: 999000

Toronto **Hydro** Corp. is spending public money on consultants, including Bay Street lawyers, to help it keep a secret - how much public money it has spent on consultants. David Rider, the Star's city hall bureau chief has been trying to ...



Hydro shaming does not help

Owen Sound Sun Times - Mon Mar 27 2017
Tone: Neutral
Ad Value: \$444
Reach: 13178 **Page:** A4

REV. DAVID SHEARMAN **Hydro One** is the **electrical** utility everyone loves to hate. Me included. I find their billing practice with the usurious and mysterious delivery charge, which no one can explain, completely ...



Wynne downplays falling popularity; But former finance minister raises alarm for 2018 election

Toronto Star - Sat Mar 25 2017
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Rob Ferguson Toronto Star

Ad Value: \$13,124
Reach: 500678 **Page:** A12

Premier Kathleen Wynne is downplaying polls that show her popularity in decline and a warning from former finance minister Greg Sorbara that the Liberals are in "grave danger" of losing the 2018 election. "There's no secret there have always been ...



Northern Ontario being hit harder by natural gas hike - Sudbury.com

www.sudbury.com - Sun Mar 26 2017
Tone: Neutral
Permalink

The price of natural gas in Northwestern Ontario is going up 5.3 per cent on April 1.



NDP hydro plan rings hollow compared to ours: Mauro - Chronicle Journal: Opinion

www.chroniclejournal.com - Sun Mar 26 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

[Permalink](#)

NDP leader Andrea Horwath made a brief stop in Thunder Bay recently to try and sell her half-baked plan to reduce electricity rates for Northwestern Ontario residents and businesses.

The Daily Observer

Kathleen Wynne has run out of our money

Daily Observer (Pembroke) - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Ad Value: \$279

Reach: 6045 Page: A4

Margaret Thatcher famously said the problem with socialism is that eventually, you run out of other people's money. In Ontario, that's the problem with Liberalism. More specifically, with Premier Kathleen Wynne's Liberalism. It's not entirely her ...



Record low approval for the Premier - CHCH

www.chch.com - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

[Permalink](#)

Premier Kathleen Wynne vows to carry on, despite a record low approval rating. In a poll released by the Angus Reid institute, Wynne received a 12% approval, which is the lowest of any Premier ever in all of Canada.



Kathleen Wynne's approval rating hits record low - Toronto - CBC News

www.cbc.ca - Fri Mar 24 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

[Permalink](#)

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne's approval rating has plunged to just 12 per cent, according to a poll released Friday by the Angus Reid Institute.



Wynne's approval rating at shocking low | The London Free Press

www.lfpress.com - Fri Mar 24 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

[Permalink](#)

A majority of Ontarians find their hydro bills "very unreasonable" and fear selling off Hydro One will only force electricity prices higher, a new Angus Reid Institute poll found.



Wynne's spin dressed up as 'fact' checking

Ottawa Citizen - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Brian Platt

Ad Value: \$5,963

Reach: 114495 Page: E7

When a government picks a slogan, you never hear the end of it. News releases, social media feeds, podium placards, radio and TV advertising, speeches by ministers - the branding is everywhere, backed by the hefty resources of the state. With the ...



Unpopular Wynne: 'I Have A Job To Do'; Says she'll stay on for 'the people of Ontario'

Toronto Sun - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Byline: Shawn Jeffords

Ad Value: \$3,285

Reach: 143813 Page: A5

Dogged by questions about her political future, Premier Kathleen Wynne found herself on the defensive about her rock-bottom approval ratings Friday. Set to address media on a meeting with auto industry leaders, Wynne slammed the breaks on her ...



The writing is on the wall

Toronto Sun - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Jerry Agar

Ad Value: \$2,458

Reach: 143813 Page: A5

Premier Kathleen Wynne's freshness date may finally have passed. Wynne's approval rating has dropped to a new all-time low of just 12%, according to a poll released by the Angus Reid Institute Friday. Shachi Kurl, executive director of the Angus ...



In Focus - Fri March 24, 2017 - Ontario Progressive Conservative Party Leader Patrick Brown - Lake 88

lake88.ca - Fri Mar 24 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

[Permalink](#)

We're joined by Ontario Progressive Conservative Party Leader Patrick Brown to talk about how his party would handle the province's hydro situation, should they be elected next year.



Minister visits Orillia to outline hydro plan

Orillia Packet & Times - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Andrew Philips

Ad Value: \$1,253

Reach: 6139 Page: A1 / Front

It definitely had a pre-election feel, but **Ontario Energy** Minister Glenn Thibault said he had been planning to visit Orillia for weeks to discuss his government's plan to tackle escalating **electricity** prices. ...



Fewer residents turned off the lights; Best Earth Hour year was 2009

Toronto Sun - Mon Mar 27 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Byline: Kevin Connor

Ad Value: \$3,244

Reach: 171076 **Page:** A10

Fewer Torontonians went to black this year for Earth Hour to help green the planet. Toronto **Hydro** says that this year's event on Saturday evening saw a drop in **electricity** use by 2.8%, or 77 megawatts. It is the equivalent to ...



Toronto marks Earth Hour with several events

Beach Mirror - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: Positive

Ad Value: \$60

Reach: 57750

Thousands of Torontonians will turn off their lights for 60 minutes March 25 for Earth Hour. This year marks the 10th annual edition of the global campaign, which aims to shine a light on **climatechange**. According to Toronto ...



Earth Hour wasn't as dark in Toronto this year

thestar.com - Fri Mar 24 2017

Tone: Positive

Byline: Emma McIntosh

Reach: 999000

Fewer Torontonians shut off their lights Saturday night for the 10th anniversary of Earth Hour than last year, according to Toronto **Hydro**. However, Toronto residents are using less and less **power** overall, so the drop in ...



Toronto marks Earth Hour but more lights on than last year - Toronto - CBC News

www.cbc.ca - Sun Mar 26 2017

Tone: Neutral

Permalink

Many Toronto residents turned off the lights for Earth Hour on Saturday but fewer homes powered down during the event this year as compared to last year, Toronto Hydro says.



CTV News | News Video - Top National News Headlines - News Videos

www.ctvnews.ca - Sun Mar 26 2017

Tone: Neutral

Byline: Hydro One speaks on impact of Earth Hour

Permalink



Toronto's electricity use dropped by 2.8% during Earth Hour

www.newswire.ca - Sun Mar 26 2017

Tone: Neutral

Permalink

Toronto Hydro customers marked the 10th anniversary of Earth Hour by switching off to help the environment. The city's electricity use dipped by 77 megawatts (MW) or 2.8%.



Alectra Utilities reports 4% less electricity used during Earth Hour

www.marketwired.com - Sun Mar 26 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

[Permalink](#)

Earth Hour 2017 saw tens of thousands Alectra Utilities customers, in the 15 communities served by the electric utility, indicate their willingness to help fight climate change by turning off their lights for 60 minutes to reduce electricity ...

THE SUN TIMES

A lot more to be answered; Ontario Power Generation's latest report on its proposed nuclear waste chamber near Lake Huron focuses on science, which leaves a lot of issues unaddressed

Owen Sound Sun Times - Mon Mar 27 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Erika Simpson

Ad Value: \$1,068

Reach: 13178 Page: A5

Should **Ontario PowerGeneration (OPG)** be allowed to bury nuclear waste near Lake Huron? The federal government could soon decide whether to give the go-ahead to the proposal to construct an underground ...



Panda: Canada should put a stop to importing oil | Calgary Herald

calgaryherald.com - Sun Mar 26 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

[Permalink](#)

Paul Crawford noted on Sunday, March 26, 2017

Energy East is mentioned.

Alberta's oil is the best in the world, but Canada continues to import more than 245,000 barrels of oil per day from countries with brutal human rights and environmental records.



Orillia audience hears about province's plan to lower hydro bills

Orillia Today - Fri Mar 24 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Frank Matys

Ad Value: \$737

Reach: 22244

Residents feeling burned by high **power** costs will enjoy some relief as the province flips the switch on a plan to cut **electricity** bills by an average of 25 per cent. In a March 24 visit to the region, **Energy** ...

NORTH BAY
NUGGET

Health care hydro costs concern city; Province lobbied to provide rate relief to hospitals

North Bay Nugget - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Ad Value: \$1,303

Reach: 12127 Page: A1 / Front

North Bay's municipal politicians have agreed to lobby the province to provide **hydro rate** relief to cashstrapped hospitals. But some council members believe

the city also should be calling on the Liberal government to extend ...

A lot more to be answered; Ontario Power Generation's latest report on its proposed nuclear waste chamber near Lake Huron focuses on science, which leaves a lot of issues unaddressed

Niagara Falls Review - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Erika Simpson

Ad Value: \$1,124

Reach: 11236 Page: A7

Should **Ontario PowerGeneration (OPG)** be allowed to bury nuclear waste near Lake Huron? The federal government could soon decide whether to give the go-ahead to the proposal to construct an underground ...



Fortune Teller

Toronto Sun - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Larry Poulin

Ad Value: \$635

Reach: 143813 Page: A16

Re "Tories can't pull plug on Grit ad campaign" (Shawn Jeffords, March 22): In my 60 years of living in Ontario, I have never seen a Liberal government be so arrogant. From Mr. **Chiarelli** telling the auditor general "the ...

Kxl Ok; Pipeline Wins 'Historic' Trump Approval, But The Battle Isn'T Over Just Yet

National Post - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Claudia Cattaneo

Ad Value: \$7,564

Reach: 185480 Page: FP1 / Front

For the past decade or so, pipeline activism had a good run. Friday's approval by U.S. President Donald Trump of the Alberta-Texas Keystone XL pipeline, during an extraordinary White House moment for TransCanada Corp. chief executive Russ Girling, ...



Keystone XL pipeline gets an OK from Trump; But White House approval doesn't clear the way from pending lawsuits and protests

Toronto Star - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: The Canadian Press

Ad Value: \$12,149

Reach: 500678 Page: A14

Canada's hotly debated, long-delayed Keystone XL pipeline received its elusive U.S. presidential permit from Donald Trump on Friday, eight years and six months after the initial application for it to cross the American border. The president made ...

C-K stands to rake in turbine cash; Not all councillors support

investment

Sarnia Observer - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Byline: Ellwood Shreve

Ad Value: \$678

Reach: 13691 Page: A5

The Municipality of Chatham is doling out nearly \$8 million in tax dollars for a chance to get a share of the profits generated from **wind** turbines. Adding this kind money to municipal coffers would normally be welcomed by any politician, ...



Notley: KXL does not lessen need for Energy East, expanded Trans Mountain | Metro Calgary

www.metronews.ca - Fri Mar 24 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

[Permalink](#)

Alberta Premier Rachel Notley says U.S. approval of the Keystone XL pipeline does not lessen the need for two other controversial proposals within Canada's borders.

Clippings Summary

Full Articles



Consumers Just Want To Know Total Cost: Oeb

Toronto Sun - Mon Mar 27 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Ad Value: \$2,438

Reach: 171076 Page: A4

The Toronto Sun asked the **Ontario Energy Board** whether there is a reason why carbon fees are not a separate item on **natural gas** and **electricity** bills? And if so, what is it? n "Administering the **cap-and-trade** program for **natural gas** consumers has become a regular part of utility business. All of the **natural gas** utility business costs are within the delivery line so it just makes sense to include it there." n "**OEB** research shows that the most important driver of consumer behaviour is total price. This has been borne out by research that the **OEB** has undertaken in the past in relation to consumers' response to **electricity** bills. This research showed that residential and small business customers are much more focused on the total amount owing on their bill than on individual line items." n "Finally, customers have been well informed about **cap and trade**. The utilities provide customers with ongoing information about the **cap-and-trade** program in accordance with guidance provided by the **OEB**. This includes providing customers with bill messages and bill inserts, website information and online **cap-and-trade** calculators that customers can use directly to determine the **cap-and-trade** portion of their individual bill."

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Power companies seek public input; St. Thomas Energy and Entegrus looking for feedback ahead of merger application this spring

Times-Journal (St.Thomas) - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Byline: Jennifer Bieman

Ad Value: \$641

Reach: 8859 Page: A6

The proposed merger of St. Thomas **Energy** and Chatham-based Entegrus is pressing on, and now the public is getting the opportunity to comment as the companies vie for regulatory approval.

The two utilities are hosting an information session March 30 in St. Thomas, their third stop after meetings in Chatham-Kent and Strathroy. The public consultations are part of the merger application by St. Thomas **Energy** and Entegrus to the **Ontario Energy Board**, the province's industry regulator. The companies are on track to make their final submission to the board by late May.

"We'll have to explain to the **Ontario Energy Board** exactly what we're doing," said Jim Hogan, president and CEO of Entegrus.

"We have to prove that this does not provide a negative impact to the customers in service as well as **rates**... From the **Ontario Energy Board's** perspective, it's all about the customer."

If the merger is approved, the two companies will become the 11th largest utility in Ontario, serving about 58,000 customers from Wheatley to St. Thomas and Parkhill. Hogan is hoping the two companies will have the **energy** board's verdict by year's end.

"Things are moving along, the community seems to be supportive. We're optimistic that it will be a six-month process at the **Ontario Energy Board**."

Based on public feedback, the biggest concern on the part of customers is privatization, Hogan said. The merged company will remain in public hands, with both municipalities taking a proportional slice of the company's shares, he said. The utilities are joining forces - not buying one another out - and both communities will have a seat at the table.

"The city of St. Thomas will own shares. The municipality of Chatham-Kent will own shares. They'll be able to appoint individuals to the board," he said, adding London-based private enterprise Corix Utilities will also have a small stake in the company.

"They are a private company but they are a minority shareholder... The majority, more than 90 per cent, will be owned by the two municipalities."

St. Thomas **Energy** chief operating officer Rob Kent said the merger will make both operations much more efficient, especially when it comes to back-end administrative costs. His Chatham-Kent counterpart said the amalgamation is a business move that might even take a bite out of consumers' bills down the road.

"We're seeing an opportunity where **rates**, on the distribution side, will be stabilized and we expect that it will be lower five to 10 years out than if we'd stayed separate," Hogan said.

//The distribution charge Entegrus' area accounts for about 20 to 21 per cent of residential bills. Once the costs associated with the merger are out of the way, Hogan said the joint-venture can capitalize on its newfound efficiencies.

Kent is excited both utilities are making progress on the merger and is eager to

see the new horizons the partnership will present.

"It gives us an opportunity to do something a little different, especially in terms of changing customer needs," he said.

"Being part of a little bigger organization, with different skill sets and specialized skill sets, I think will enable us to meet all these challenges. It's a very exciting time for us."

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Ameresco Partnership Assists London District Catholic School Board to Meet Climate Change Targets

finance.yahoo.com - Fri Mar 24 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Ameresco, Inc. (AMRC), a leading energy efficiency and renewable energy company, announced today that it is progressing on its energy savings project with the London District Catholic School Board (LDCSB) and helping the Board fulfill new climate change targets.

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Polling shows hydro was No. 1 concern in Ontario long before relief announced | CTV News

www.ctvnews.ca - Mon Mar 27 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Ontario's government learned from its own polling that the rising cost of hydro was people's top concern 10 months before the Liberals publicly acknowledged it and announced an eight-per-cent reduction on electricity bills.

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Partisan ads abuse of taxes

Toronto Star - Mon Mar 27 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Ad Value: \$3,166

Reach: 361323 Page: A10

In 2004, former Liberal premier Dalton McGuinty gave the provincial auditor general supreme oversight of government advertising. Unfortunately, Premier Kathleen Wynne felt too constrained by these regulations and watered them down in 2015.

This reversal has now allowed her to spend taxpayer money on a radio advertising blitz promoting the government's decision to cut **hydro rates** by 25 per cent. This is a blatant abuse of taxpayer funds and the **Energy** Minister Glenn Thibeault's contention that such advertising is legitimate and necessary for keeping Ontarians informed is disingenuous to say the least.

If I want to know what governments are doing, I'll read about it in my daily newspaper, listen to the radio or watch the television news.

Opposition leaders Andrea Horwath and Patrick Brown have both promised to re-strengthen the laws relating to partisan political advertising at taxpayer expense and it's time Kathleen Wynne did the same.

Diana Hooper, Willowdale

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Cap & trade, hide & seek: Couple went through a 'rat's maze' to find out what Grit scheme really costs them

Toronto Sun - Mon Mar 27 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Antonella Artuso

Ad Value: \$5,621

Reach: 171076 Page: A4

Ontario residents shouldn't have to work their way through a "rat's maze" to figure out the **cap-and-trade** charge on their **natural gas** bills, Mississauga senior Muriel Chudiak says.

Since the fee kicked in on Jan. 1, Chudiak has been on a mission to get the **Ontario Energy Board** and Ontario Liberal government to stop "hiding" it in the delivery charge.

The tenacious 75-year-old wrote to Premier Kathleen Wynne twice, her local MPP Charles Sousa, **Energy** Minister Glenn Thibeault and the **Ontario Energy Board (OEB)** demanding to know why consumers can't be told up front how much they're paying.

The **OEB** directed her to a website where she could calculate her bill that turned out not to work, she said.

With the help of her local **natural gas** utility, she and her husband, Bill, eventually tracked down the online calculator where she found out her monthly cap-andtrade cost was twice the \$5 the Wynne government originally suggested it would be, she said.

They then found an online shortcut to the calculator, added Chudiak.

"My husband and I are quite active and fairly knowledgeable seniors. We couldn't have made it through this exercise without help from Enbridge's customer service," she said. "What about other seniors, people who don't have a computer, busy families? Are they going to have the time and patience and, particularly, the computer savvy to go through this exercise to find out how much we're being charged? "It seems obvious to me and my husband, but I don't think Ms. Wynne or the **Ontario Energy Board** really want us to know how much we're paying for the cap-andtrade charge each month and they're just making it as difficult as possible for us to get this knowing very well that most people won't even bother," she said.

According to the **OEB**, an Enbridge customer will see an average monthly bill impact of \$6.70 while a **Union Gas** customer in the southern zone can expect to get hit up for an average monthly increase of \$6.16. The actual **cap-and-trade** fee varies based on usage.

Because the fee does change, Chudiak said it's important that customers know what they're paying. But she can't convince anyone in government or the **OEB** that transparency is important when it comes to the **cap-and-trade** charge.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk and - according to a survey she commissioned - 89% of **natural gas** customers want to see that fee clearly on the bill.

"I got a reply from Kathleen Wynne's office and it was a form letter that didn't even respond to anything I said in my e-mail. So, I wrote back again requesting a proper response and a few weeks later got back the very same form letter," Chudiak said. "I never did hear from Glenn Thibeault's office."

A staff member in Sousa's office did provide a lengthy explanation in writing.

"It's a full page of, in my opinion, nonsense," Chudiak said. "He's a nice young fellow ... I believe he's just spitting out what he was told."

A spokesman from Thibeault's office told the Toronto Sun that decisions on consumer bills are made by the **OEB**, which is an independent regulator for the province's **energy** sector, and that the **cap-and-trade** charge was included in the delivery portion of the **natural gas** bill after extensive consultations with consumers and stakeholders.

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Mission: Impossible

Toronto Sun - Mon Mar 27 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Ad Value: \$1,529

Reach: 171076 Page: A1 / Front

Mississauga senior Muriel Chudiak wants Premier Kathleen Wyne to stop 'hiding' **cap-and-trade** charges on **energy** bills. All she's got is a runaround.

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Toronto Hydro and the power of secrecy: analysis

thestar.com - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: David Rider

Reach: 999000

Toronto **Hydro** Corp. is spending public money on consultants, including Bay Street lawyers, to help it keep a secret - how much public money it has spent on consultants. David Rider, the Star's city hall bureau chief has been trying to find out. It's a battle that has now been fought for more than a year - and there is no end in sight.

January 2016 - Using anonymous sources, I revealed (www.thestar.com) behind-the-scenes work to set the stage for a partial privatization of the century-old **power** distributor of which the City of Toronto is sole shareholder.

Jan. 8, 2016 - My story "Toronto **Hydro** privatization plan in the works" is published.

Jan. 22, 2016 - I then submitted two applications to **hydro** (www.torontohydro.com) under Ontario's freedom of information legislation. I asked for copies of internal **hydro** communications mentioning any possible privatization, and for the estimated cost of all work done by consultants, including lawyers and pollsters, related to a possible sale.

To me it seemed basic information, albeit potentially controversial for an arm's length agency that had no mandate from city council to explore a possible sale. I expected a fight, fueled by institutional aversion to lifting the hood on internal machinations, and maybe the grudging release of some pages mostly or fully blanked out.

That would force me to appeal to Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner (www.ipc.on.ca) (IPC) in hopes **hydro** would be ordered to fully live up to its responsibilities under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Feb. 25, 2016 - I was wrong and, after decades of trying to pry information out of

government, hopelessly naïve. **Hydro** has refused to even process my request.

Fourteen months later, awaiting a final ruling by IPC, I have received nothing from **hydro** except, via lawyers the utility is paying to fight me, dozens of pages of arguments about why the utility cannot, and will not, acknowledge that such records do or do not exist. Forget actually looking for them and handing them to a reporter.

April 29, 2016 - The lawyers from Norton Rose Fulbright Canada - hired to work on privatization and now to fight my requests - argue that, based on an argument invoking Ontario securities law, buttressed by an affidavit from a hired U of T law professor, the IPC should "reject my appeal at the intake stage" - kill it before it can take a breath.

Hydro is not publicly traded. Information about consultants could not give me or anyone else inside information that would impact the stock market. Still, IPC says the utility, which issues bonds that can be resold privately, has raised complex questions over its potentially conflicting duties to the Securities Act and the FOI law.

June 11, 2016 - The Star argues that IPC should reject **hydro's** argument that "selective disclosure" of information is tantamount to insider trading, and find that Securities Act concerns do not erase a public institution's FOI obligations.

Even if IPC sides with me, **hydro** could keep the fight alive by going to provincial court seeking judicial review. That could be a very expensive battle for both sides.

Amid many exchanges for which I had to get my own legal advice, the privatization push died and with it, presumably, the work of consultants whom, as I reported last October, included two key members of Mayor John Tory's 2014 election team (www.thestar.com). Yet **hydro** is fighting me as hard as ever.

Sept. 2, 2016 - IPC announces appeal is in inquiry stage, invites submissions from both sides.

Oct. 17, 2016 - Bay Street lawyers for **hydro** submit 31-page argument to **hydro** including affidavit from a U of T professor who is expert on securities.

Nov. 17, 2016 - I make my submission, that the information is in the public interest, that Securities Law doesn't trump **hydro's** responsibility under MFIPPA, and that IPC should ignore the professor's submission.

Nov. 24, 2016 - Mayor John Tory publicly takes **hydro** privatization off the table.

Dec. 7, 2016 - IPC invites final rebuttals to each other's submissions

I'm not the only one puzzled. Paul Ainslie, a city councillor, sits on Toronto **Hydro's** board of directors.

"There's a city hall culture I'm used to, more open, and then there's private business," and that's the way the **hydro** chief executive and his senior team see the highly regulated utility, Ainslie says.

"With a freedom of information act request, I think there's a mindset there that more often than not they see themselves as a business . . . My perspective is Toronto **Hydro** is a very well run organization and I understand that there's confidential material that you have to keep private to run a business, but in terms of information like this I don't know why they're going to such an extent to try to hide it."

Ainslie was surprised to learn **hydro**, which has its own legal department, is using Norton Rose Fulbright Canada to fight an FOI request.

"I know Norton Rose was hired as an outside legal consultant when we were looking at some type of IPO or business model that would see the sale of up to 49 per cent of Toronto **Hydro**, and my understanding is that is the only reason we hired them, so I'm a little surprised that they're fighting freedom of information requests put forward by a journalist," he says.

The two other councillors on **hydro**'s 13-member board, Stephen Holyday and Deputy Mayor Denzil Minnan-Wong, declined to comment on the utility's responsibility to respond to FOI requests.

Councillor Gord Perks, a city councillor not on the **hydro** board, who successfully argued against the merits of privatization, says: "There is no excuse to hide from the public how public money is being spent. Mr. (Anthony) Haines needs to come to the understanding that he works for the people of Toronto and he needs to be accountable to them."

The Star asked to speak to Haines for this story. **Hydro** spokesman Brian Buchan replied on his behalf: "As you are aware, it is Toronto **Hydro**'s policy to not respond to market speculation or rumour.

"As you indicate, you have multiple access to information requests that are either in process, or in respect of which appeals are currently pending before the Information and Privacy Commissioner . . . We are fulfilling our obligations in respect of your requests and fully participating in the IPC process. As this matter is still before the IPC, we have no further comment."

Recently I made a new FOI request to **hydro**. I want to know how much public money the utility has spent on contractors to fight my request for information about how much public money it has spent on contractors.

Jan. 13, 2017 - I submit my two new FOIs.

Feb. 14, 2017 - **Hydro** denies my request.

March 8, 2017 - I appeal that denial to the IPC.

Hydro says it cannot confirm or deny the existence of such records and dismissed my request as "frivolous and/or vexatious." While refusing my request, **hydro** executive vice-president Amanda Klein references my request for comment.

"Your express indications to us that you intend to attempt to build a story in the media around your existing appeals lead us to believe that this request amounts to an abuse of the right of access, is made in bad faith and/or is made for a purpose other than to obtain access," she wrote.

"You may appeal to the Information and Privacy Commissioner ..."

"

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THE SUN TIMES

Hydro shaming does not help

Owen Sound Sun Times - Mon Mar 27 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Ad Value: \$444

Reach: 13178 Page: A4

REV. DAVID SHEARMAN **Hydro** One is the **electrical** utility everyone loves to hate. Me included. I find their billing practice with the usurious and mysterious delivery charge, which no one can explain, completely unacceptable. I believe **Time of Use** charges are nothing but a form of social engineering and I am offended that **Hydro** One practices **energy** shaming.

You may not recognize the term **energy** shaming. You only receive it if you signed up for their Home **Energy** Dashboard. It is intended to bring transparency to my **energy** use, track my progress and share **energy** efficiency tips.

What it does is compare my **energy** use with other users in my area and shames me by telling me I use 86 per cent more **energy** than my neighbours. Really? The report tells me I used an average of 1,100 kilowatt hours of **hydro** every month over the last year. I won't argue with **Hydro** One's smart meters. But then it says that 100 homes of the same size, who have non-**electric** heat, use an average of 637 kilowatt hours of **electricity** a month. Say what? The icing on the cake are the super keeners. They are the most efficient 20 per cent of the group of 100 and they use 387 kilowatt hours of **electricity** a month.

Helpfully, **Hydro** One tells me, "You used more than average. Turn over for ways to save." I turn the report over. **Hydro** One offers me three suggestions. Wash clothes in cold water. Check. Been doing that for years. Install efficient shower heads. Check. Both shower heads are low flow. Buy **energy** star certified appliances. Check. Every appliance is **Energy** Star certified.

What **Hydro** One doesn't recognize is that those hundred houses who use 80 per cent less **hydro** than I do are probably using **natural gas** water heaters and **gas**-fired clothes dryers. And are using less **electricity**. Or they don't watch TV. Or they sit in the dark after sundown.

I don't. For solid technical reasons, I can't install a **gas**-fired hot water tank. I have also been advised to wait until the **electric** dryer dies before replacing it with a **gas** dryer. I watch TV in the evening.

Hydro One says I can save \$1,255 a year by lowering my **electrical** consumption. Really? Every light, outdoors and in, is an LED. When there is no **electrical** load at night, my house consumes less than seven kilowatt hours of **electricity**. My house is well insulated. I have followed every single applicable tip on the **Hydro** One web site. Yet they keep telling me that I need to do more; I need to do better. That's **energy** shaming.

A pox on **Hydro** One's useless practices. They can stop with the useless **energy** saving hints. In this month's bill, they sent me some coupons for timers I don't need, dimmer switches I don't want and LED light bulbs I can't use. Thanks for nothing, **Hydro** One.

Rev. David Shearman is a retired United Church minister in Owen Sound and the host of Faithworks on Rogers TV - Grey County.

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Wynne downplays falling popularity; But former finance minister raises alarm for 2018 election

Toronto Star - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Rob Ferguson Toronto Star

Ad Value: \$13,124

Reach: 500678 Page: A12

Premier Kathleen Wynne is downplaying polls that show her popularity in decline and a warning from former finance minister Greg Sorbara that the Liberals are in "grave danger" of losing the 2018 election.

"There's no secret there have always been people in the Liberal party who weren't keen on me," Wynne told reporters Friday after meeting with auto industry executives and union leaders.

The premier said she hopes public opinion will improve once Ontarians feel the full effect of her promised 25-per-cent cut to skyrocketing **hydro rates** this summer.

"I know that the issue around **electricity** prices has been very, very hard for people," said Wynne, who added she has no plans to step aside.

"I'm doing that job and I'm going to continue to do that job."

Liberals are placing second to Patrick Brown's Progressive Conservatives in most polls and Wynne's personal popularity is in the low double digits. The latest Angus Reid Institute survey has her at 12 per cent.

Sorbara, a key architect of Liberal majorities under former premier Dalton McGuinty, raised concerns this week about the party's prospects for the provincial election next year and whether Wynne should step down.

"The fact is this is going to be a very difficult campaign," he said on TVO's The Agenda. "The (poll) numbers today are the same and getting worse ... the fact is the numbers do not lie and the ability to win the next election is in grave, grave doubt."

Economic Development Minister Brad Duguid came to Wynne's rescue in a news conference, saying Ontario's economy is the strongest in Canada and the jobless **rate** is at its lowest in years.

There is talk in the corridors of Queen's Park about who might replace Wynne as leader if the **hydro rate** cut doesn't lead to a bounce in the polls.

At the meeting with auto industry types, Wynne said efforts continued to forge a common front as the Trump administration pushes renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement - particularly with companies taking advantage of lower wages in Mexico.

The aim is to protect Ontario's auto industry, which accounts for 15 per cent of North American production.

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[Northern Ontario being hit harder by natural gas hike - Sudbury.com](#)

www.sudbury.com - Sun Mar 26 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

The price of natural gas in Northwestern Ontario is going up 5.3 per cent on April 1.

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[NDP hydro plan rings hollow compared to ours: Mauro - Chronicle Journal: Opinion](#)

www.chroniclejournal.com - Sun Mar 26 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

NDP leader Andrea Horwath made a brief stop in Thunder Bay recently to try and sell her half-baked plan to reduce electricity rates for Northwestern Ontario residents and businesses.

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The Daily Observer

Kathleen Wynne has run out of our money

Daily Observer (Pembroke) - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Ad Value: \$279

Reach: 6045 Page: A4

Margaret Thatcher famously said the problem with socialism is that eventually, you run out of other people's money. In Ontario, that's the problem with Liberalism. More specifically, with Premier Kathleen Wynne's Liberalism.

It's not entirely her fault. She shares the blame with her Liberal predecessor, Dalton McGuinty.

Together, they more than doubled the \$138-billion debt the Liberals inherited from the previous Conservative government in 2003 to more than \$300 billion, making Ontario the most indebted subsovereign (non-national) borrower in the world.

That explains the shell game Wynne is now playing as the clock ticks down to the next election scheduled for June 2018.

It explains her reducing **electricity** bills to **hydro ratepayers**, by having them subsidized by provincial taxpayers. Unfortunately, they're the same people. Laughably, Wynne and the Liberals now challenge the opposition parties to explain what they would do differently, the same tactic they used when they cancelled two **gas** plants at a public cost of up to \$1.1 billion over 20 years.

Essentially, they're asking what a competent government would have done differently, and on that score there are plenty of answers.

For example, not waste billions of dollars on green **energy** that wasn't needed to replace **coal-fired electricity**, which the Liberals actually replaced with nuclear **power** and **natural gas**.

Not give **wind** and **solarpower** developers outrageously generous, 20-year, no-cut contracts for expensive, unreliable and unneeded **power**.

Power we have to buy first, before all other forms of **energy**, making the entire system run less efficiently, meaning we have to sell less expensive forms of conventional **energy** at a loss to Quebec and the U.S., or pay **energy** producers not to provide **electricity**.

Thus, the answer to the Liberal challenge of what the opposition parties would have done is pretty simple.

It starts with not repeating all the disastrous blunders the Liberals made that doubled **hydro rates** in a decade.

This also explains Wynne having to sell 60 per cent of **Hydro** One so she can balance the budget next year, an election promise which is meaningless because it does nothing to solve the structural deficit the Liberals have created in the province's books.

Because that's what happens when you run out of other people's money.

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Record low approval for the Premier - CHCH

www.chch.com - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Premier Kathleen Wynne vows to carry on, despite a record low approval rating.

In a poll released by the Angus Reid institute, Wynne received a 12% approval, which is the lowest of any Premier ever in all of Canada.

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[Kathleen Wynne's approval rating hits record low - Toronto - CBC News](#)

www.cbc.ca - Fri Mar 24 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne's approval rating has plunged to just 12 per cent, according to a poll released Friday by the Angus Reid Institute.

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[Wynne's approval rating at shocking low | The London Free Press](#)

www.lfpress.com - Fri Mar 24 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

A majority of Ontarians find their hydro bills "very unreasonable" and fear selling off Hydro One will only force electricity prices higher, a new Angus Reid Institute poll found.

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[Wynne's spin dressed up as 'fact' checking](#)

Ottawa Citizen - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Brian Platt

Ad Value: \$5,963

Reach: 114495 Page: E7

When a government picks a slogan, you never hear the end of it.

News releases, social media feeds, podium placards, radio and TV advertising, speeches by ministers - the branding is everywhere, backed by the hefty resources of the state.

With the federal Liberal government, it's been "real change" and "a strong middle class," over and over again.

In Ontario, the slogan after the 2014 election was "building Ontario up," and, more particularly, the government's "four-part plan to build Ontario up." Everything the government did somehow fit into those four parts. It was on every single news release for years.

When the legislature cafeteria cancelled its Friday \$5 fish-and-chips special (to my lasting chagrin), I have no doubt the premier's office could have justified it with the four-part plan if asked.

This is how political messaging works. It gets repeated endlessly so it percolates through to the public, even if the media never uses it.

Premier Kathleen Wynne's Liberals now have a new slogan, with its own website and social media accounts. It's called "The facts still matter in Ontario," and it involves a daily effort to fact check something the Opposition (almost always Progressive Conservative leader Patrick Brown) has said.

Sometimes these "facts still matter" dispatches come from the Liberal party; sometimes they come from a cabinet minister's office. It's both a Liberal party slogan and an Ontario government slogan. Expect to hear it constantly.

It's a clear attempt to exploit the concerns over fake news, and the stream of lies coming from the White House. Media organizations are fighting off attacks on their credibility, Facebook is attempting to flag fake stories and civic institutions everywhere are grappling with the dwindling effectiveness of fact-based arguments. It's a very real problem.

So now the Ontario Liberals, and by extension the government, are declaring themselves the champions of facts.

You can anticipate how this is turning out. They do indeed catch some incorrect claims, but they don't stop there. No, everything must fit the message. So we get dubious political spin dressed up as fact-checking.

Here's a "fact check" they sent out the other day. The PCs called **cap-and-trade**, which is expected to raise \$1.9 billion a year in new government revenue, a cash grab. "Fact: Wrong again," the Liberals wrote. "Every dollar generated through **cap and trade** will be deposited in a dedicated account and reinvested into green projects." (It goes on to tell us how great the projects are.)

Actual fact: Many of those projects were already in the works, but are now being funded from this new revenue stream. Ontario is not offsetting carbon pricing revenue with tax breaks, as British Columbia is. Ontario is grabbing the cash and spending it on stuff. Whatever you think of these projects, it is not factually wrong to call the funding mechanism a cash grab.

At a time when the U.S. president is shamelessly using his office to spread conspiracy theories and insult those trying to respond with reason, we really don't need the Ontario government further degrading the meaning of a fact and adding to the atmosphere of cynicism.

And the Liberals have already demonstrated how they really feel about having to scrupulously stick to facts.

We used to have a law - passed by Liberal premier Dalton McGuinty in 2004 - that forced taxpayer-funded government advertising to only be used for public service information campaigns. The auditor general could halt government ads whose primary purpose was obviously self-promotion of the governing party.

Wynne's Liberals gutted that law in the spring of 2015. They didn't want ads filled with dry facts; they wanted ads that sold their message to voters.

And now we have a blitz of taxpayer-funded advertising promoting Wynne's new plan to reduce **hydro rates**.

For the Liberals, as with all political parties, a fact is only worth mentioning when it makes them look good.

Brian Platt is the deputy digital editor for the Ottawa Citizen. Previously, he was based at Queen's Park as a policy reporter. twitter.com/btaplatt

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Unpopular Wynne: 'I Have A Job To Do'; Says she'll stay on for 'the people of Ontario'

Toronto Sun - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Byline: Shawn Jeffords

Ad Value: \$3,285
Reach: 143813 **Page:** A5

Dogged by questions about her political future, Premier Kathleen Wynne found herself on the defensive about her rock-bottom approval ratings Friday.

Set to address media on a meeting with auto industry leaders, Wynne slammed the breaks on her message track to address a new Angus Reid poll that put approval rating at 12%, down from a high of 41% in Sept. 2014.

And that finding comes three weeks after the premier announced a 17% **hydrorate** reduction to help bolster her flagging popularity.

The gambit may not have helped according to the poll, but Wynne says she is determined to stay on and fight in the 2018 election next June.

"People haven't seen the impact on their bills yet," Wynne said. "But with all of that, I have a job to do. I made a commitment to the people of Ontario in 2014. I'm doing that job and I'm going to continue to do that job."

Wynne was also questioned about comments from former Liberal finance minister Greg Sorbara on TVO earlier this week, suggesting the premier may want to consider stepping down because she is "extremely unlikely" to win the next election. Sorbara, who managed two majority government-winning campaigns for former premier Dalton McGuinty, said Wynne's approval ratings will be difficult to turn.

Wynne dismissed Sorbara's comments as "punditry."

"Punditry is a wonderful thing," she said. "Retired politicians engaging in punditry is an even more wonderful thing. I will leave Greg and whoever else to their opinions. There's no secret there have always been people in the Liberal Party who weren't keen on me. That's a reality."

Economic development minister Brad Duguid jumped to Wynne's defence during the press conference, saying she still has the confidence of her caucus. **Energy rates** have become a "lightning rod" for general discontent in the province and that has impacted Wynne's approvals, he said.

"(Wynne) is focusing on the things that matter to Ontarians," he said. "That's why our caucus members are so firmly behind this Premier and why we're confident that she will not only lead us into the next election, she will help us once again win that next election." sjeffords@postmedia.com

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The writing is on the wall

Toronto Sun - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Jerry Agar

Ad Value: \$2,458
Reach: 143813 **Page:** A5

Premier Kathleen Wynne's freshness date may finally have passed. Wynne's approval rating has dropped to a new all-time low of just 12%, according to a poll released by the Angus Reid Institute Friday.

Shachi Kurl, executive director of the Angus Reid Institute said, "We tend to see premiers offering up their resignations or quitting politics when their approval levels get to this point."

Indeed, in September of 2012 an Angus Reid poll revealed, "32% of respondents said they approved of Dalton McGuinty's performance." The next

month McGuinty - Wynne's predecessor - stepped down.

In public Wynne's caucus supports her.

But it is telling that each week as Liberal MPP Arthur Potts (Beaches-East York) appears on my NEWSTALK1010 radio show, his response to my constant badgering of him over Wynne's polling numbers is to repeat that while her numbers are low, he insists that the Liberal's policies and actions are popular.

When asked if that means that it would make sense for the party to throw Wynne off the boat and elect a new leader, presenting the fresh face they insisted Wynne was when McGuinty left, he insists that is not the plan. What is the plan? Wynne announced that our **hydro** bills would go down by 25% by adding to the bills our children will pay. Yet her numbers dropped.

Her response was, "People haven't seen the impact on their bills yet. But you know with all of that, I have a job to do. I made a commitment to the people of Ontario in 2014, I'm doing that job and I'm going to continue to do that job."

"That job," is drawing unprecedented low approval, yet she soldiers on as if all is well. It is dysfunctional.

Meanwhile on Friday the government announced, "Ontario is continuing to boost income for workers across the province by increasing the general minimum wage for the fourth consecutive year, which will bring the wage up to \$11.60 this fall."

Will an extra 20 cents an hour tip more low-income people back into Wynne's camp? How will it impact business owners? Both the minimum wage and the **hydro** price change are attempts to win support by spending other people's money, and for a change it appears not to be working.

The recent poll found 82% of those surveyed oppose the sale of shares in **Hydro** One to private investors, while 74% described their **electricity** bills as "very unreasonable" or "fairly unreasonable."

Those numbers are so high it is certain that even those who might regularly support the Liberals are angry over **hydro** issues.

The decisions your government makes matter. Hopefully enough voters realize that treating politics like a team sport is dangerous. Being a liberal shouldn't be like being a Leafs fan.

Supporting a sports team through thick and thin is admirable; that's what fans do. Doing the same with a political party is counter-productive, and perhaps these recent poll numbers show citizens realize that.

Agar hosts the 9 a.m. to noon show on Newstalk1010 jerry.agar@sunmedia.ca @jerryagar1010

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In Focus - Fri March 24, 2017 - Ontario Progressive Conservative Party Leader Patrick Brown - Lake 88

lake88.ca - Fri Mar 24 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

We're joined by Ontario Progressive Conservative Party Leader Patrick Brown to talk about how his party would handle the province's hydro situation, should they be elected next year.

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Minister visits Orillia to outline hydro plan

Orillia Packet & Times - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: Neutral

Byline: Andrew Philips

Ad Value: \$1,253

Reach: 6139 **Page:** A1 / Front

It definitely had a pre-election feel, but **Ontario Energy** Minister Glenn Thibault said he had been planning to visit Orillia for weeks to discuss his government's plan to tackle escalating **electricity** prices.

"(Orillia) wasn't singled out because it's Patrick Brown's riding," Thibault said, referring to the Simcoe North MPP, who leads the provincial Progressive Conservatives.

Thibault and Barrie MPP Ann Hoggarth joined local politicians and social services leaders Friday at Orillia's Housing Resource Centre to outline Ontario's Fair **Hydro** Plan that he pledged will lower **electricity** bills by 25% on average for all residential consumers in the province.

"I know affordable access to **electricity** is a critical issue here in Simcoe County," said Thibault, adding he was charged by Premier Kathleen Wynne with working to lower **electricity** costs nine months ago.

"By moving ahead with this significant reform we will be providing significant relief by this summer."

Mayor Steve Clarke said **electricity** prices are always front and centre when it comes to assessing costs.

"I was hearing about **energy** prices when we were going through the negotiations with **Hydro One**," Clarke said, referring to last year's sale of Orillia **Power** Distribution Corporation to **Hydro One** for \$26.35 million.

"Our municipal partners in rural areas certainly have concerns about pricing."

Hoggarth, who is also parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services agreed: "We weren't hearing quite the same concerns in our urban area, but it has been a big issue in rural areas."

But the plan should help them as well, according to Thibault, who noted many small businesses and farms will also benefit from the initiative, with additional relief for people with low incomes and those living in eligible rural communities.

Thibault, who also noted that **rate** increases over the next four years would be held to the **rate** of inflation for everyone, said bills have been escalating over the years because the province was working to improve the system.

That became paramount following blackouts experienced across the province in 2003, he said, adding that eliminating the use of coal provincially that has seen the number of "smog days" drop from 53 in 2005 to none reported last year.

Clarke said the province's plan should also help those struggling to make ends meet.

"I see merit to this," he said. "It will really help our most vulnerable citizens."

But Clarke said he was surprised by some of the information Thibault shared, including the reasons behind the higher prices, such as eliminating coal use and moving toward cleaner, **renewable energy**.

"I think the province has done a poor job of letting people know why the costs have gone up," he said.

Thibault said the billing issue centred around the fact funding towards the system improvements and key financial assistance programs were unfairly falling almost entirely on the shoulders of today's **ratepayers**. Now, the province plans to refinance those capital investments "to ensure that system costs are more equitably distributed over time."

United Way of Bruce Grey executive director Francesca Dobbyn also attended Friday's announcement and said she was enthused by the various funding initiatives available to help those in need.

"Our organization is very pleased that the province has listened to our concerns and made these concrete changes," said Dobbyn, who noted her organization has operated a utility/poverty program for the past decade.

"We've made this a provincial issue." andrewphilips@live.ca

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Fewer residents turned off the lights; Best Earth Hour year was 2009

Toronto Sun - Mon Mar 27 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Byline: Kevin Connor

Ad Value: \$3,244

Reach: 171076 **Page:** A10

Fewer Torontonians went to black this year for Earth Hour to help green the planet.

Toronto **Hydro** says that this year's event on Saturday evening saw a drop in **electricity** use by 2.8%, or 77 megawatts.

It is the equivalent to having 31,000 homes removed from Toronto's **hydro** grid.

That's down from 2016's Earth Hour - which starts every year at 8:30 p.m. - when **electricity** use dropped by 3.2%.

Toronto **Hydro** says the 10th anniversary of the event in the city this year was successful.

"We're happy with the results of this year's Earth Day and want to thank everyone who took part," said spokesman Tori **Gass**.

"But we also want to recognize everyone out there that makes an effort to reduce their **electricity** use each and every day of the year."

The city's most successful Earth Hour was in 2009, when **electricity** use dropped by 15.1% A Toronto **Hydro** poll shows 54% of customers say they have become smarter about their **energy** use in the last decade.

In fact, from 2006 to 2015 city residents have achieved **energy** savings of 1,756 gigawatt hours, which is equal to taking 600 large condo buildings off the grid.

That drop also helped remove 1.1 million tonnes in greenhouse **gas** emissions and is the same as taking 34,000 cars off the road.

Lower Earth Hour results aren't as important as reducing the consumption **rates** all year.

"Whether or not you turn your lights off in March for an hour isn't the point. For people to use less is the message," said Franz Hartmann with the Toronto Environmental Alliance.'

"It's when you go to buy a new fridge or TV and get the one that uses less **electricity**. If that's happening it's a good thing."

Skyrocketing **electricity rates** across the province have many families watching their consumption **rates**.

"You have to be careful, because it costs too much," said Brett Penney, while grocery shopping with his family downtown and admitting he didn't take part in Earth Hour.

"You have to have heat and lights, but you don't keep every light on in the house."

Earth Hour started in 2007 by the World Wildlife Fund and today 172 countries participate for environmentally sustainable action.

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Toronto marks Earth Hour with several events

Beach Mirror - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Ad Value: \$60

Reach: 57750

Thousands of Torontonians will turn off their lights for 60 minutes March 25 for Earth Hour.

This year marks the 10th annual edition of the global campaign, which aims to shine a light on **climate** change.

According to Toronto **Hydro**, in 2016 enough **energy** was saved in that hour to **power** 36,000? homes in Toronto.

Created by the World Wildlife Fund, Earth Hour runs from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. in cities across the world.

There are several ways Torontonians can mark Earth Hour:

? The fifth annual Earth Hour Lights Out! Celebration at Kew Gardens Park, 2017 Queen St. E., at Lee Ave., at 7:30 p.m. All are welcome to come to the Beach and enjoy live music, dance, a lights-out ceremony, candlelight and paper lanterns. Visit beachesliving.ca/lightsout for more details.

? There are also a number of guided walks in Toronto. In the west end, there will be two walks starting at 8:15 p.m. at Queen Street West and Cowan Avenue and at Roncesvalles Avenue and Dundas Street West. Both groups will then meet at the intersection of Queen, Roncesvalles, King and The Queensway. There will also be a walk starting at 8:30 p.m. at Centennial Park Arena, off Centennial Park Road, and one by Heritage York and Freen 13 at Lambton House on Old Dundas Street.

? Take advantage of the clear skies to do some stargazing. University of Toronto's AstroTours will host a free event with prof. Suresh Sivanandam starting at 7 p.m. sharp at the Earth Sciences Centre, 5 Bancroft Ave., Room 1050. Admission is free but online registration is required. Visit (www.astro.utoronto.ca) for more details.

? Enjoy at candlelight dinner for a great cause at the InterContinental Toronto Centre. Part of the evening's profits will be donated to Evergreen. Email azure@ihg.com or call 416-597-8142 to make a reservation.

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Earth Hour wasn't as dark in Toronto this year

thestar.com - Fri Mar 24 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Byline: Emma McIntosh

Reach: 999000

Fewer Torontonians shut off their lights Saturday night for the 10th anniversary of Earth Hour than last year, according to Toronto **Hydro**.

However, Toronto residents are using less and less **power** overall, so the drop in participation during this year's event doesn't mean enthusiasm for the movement is waning, said Toronto **Hydro** spokesperson Tori Glass.

"People are actively saving **electricity** in their everyday lives, so Earth Hour seems to have done a great job in promoting the message," she said via email.

In the city, **electricity** demand was 77 megawatts lower than a typical Saturday in March - a 2.8 per cent drop that's equivalent to taking 31,000 homes off the grid, according to Toronto **Hydro**.

Last year (www.thestar.com) , the drop was 89 megawatts; in 2015 it was 103.

Local revelers celebrated Earth Hour with candelit acoustic performances at bars across the city, guided walks and even a party illuminated with paper lanterns and candles at Kew Gardens in the Beach neighbourhood.

The World Wildlife Fund started Earth Hour in Australia in 2007. The event - running from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. local time across the world - encourages people, businesses and communities to shut off non-essential **electricity** to show support for environmental sustainability. In the decade since it began, the event has grown into a global movement with millions of participants in 172 countries.

"Earth Hour is a visual signal that ordinary people the world over want to change **climate** change," said the World Wildlife Fund in an emailed statement Saturday.

"It's a sign we haven't forgotten about the Paris Agreement, and our determination to halt the degradation **climate** change causes to our environment. When you see a candle in your neighbour's window, when you see your community go dark, when you see that these small, symbolic actions are visible from outer space the world over, you see you're not alone on this issue."

The Toronto skyline was dimmer than usual to mark the occasion as local landmarks like the CN Tower and the famous Toronto sign at Nathan Phillips Square shut off their lights.

Thousands of other landmarks worldwide also went dark for the 10th anniversary of the event, including the Eiffel Tower, the Sydney Opera House, Big Ben, the Empire State Building and the Pyramids of Egypt.

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Toronto marks Earth Hour but more lights on than last year - Toronto - CBC News

www.cbc.ca - Sun Mar 26 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Many Toronto residents turned off the lights for Earth Hour on Saturday but fewer homes powered down during the event this year as compared to last year,

Toronto Hydro says.

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[CTV News | News Video - Top National News Headlines - News Videos](#)

www.ctvnews.ca - Sun Mar 26 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Hydro One speaks on impact of Earth Hour

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[Toronto's electricity use dropped by 2.8% during Earth Hour](#)

www.newswire.ca - Sun Mar 26 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Toronto Hydro customers marked the 10th anniversary of Earth Hour by switching off to help the environment. The city's electricity use dipped by 77 megawatts (MW) or 2.8%.

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[Alectra Utilities reports 4% less electricity used during Earth Hour](#)

www.marketwired.com - Sun Mar 26 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Earth Hour 2017 saw tens of thousands Alectra Utilities customers, in the 15 communities served by the electric utility, indicate their willingness to help fight climate change by turning off their lights for 60 minutes to reduce electricity consumption.

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THE SUN TIMES

[A lot more to be answered; Ontario Power Generation's latest report on its proposed nuclear waste chamber near Lake Huron focuses on science, which leaves a lot of issues unaddressed](#)

Owen Sound Sun Times - Mon Mar 27 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Erika Simpson

Ad Value: \$1,068

Reach: 13178 Page: A5

Should **Ontario Power Generation (OPG)** be allowed to bury nuclear waste near Lake Huron? The federal government could soon decide whether to give the go-ahead to the proposal to construct an underground disposal site at the Bruce nuclear complex - just 1.6km from the lakeshore.

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Presumably transporting nuclear waste on Ontario's highways would need to be kept secret due in part to potential terrorism. Would some roads, like Highway 401, have to be shut down entirely so that there would be no chance of a strike against the trucks? The report does not consider whether roads and the Bruce site can be made invulnerable to attack. Soft targets are called soft for a reason.

But, it's not just terrorists. No mention is made in the report of countries that have encountered strong public opposition to transporting nuclear waste. German television regularly airs scenes of protesters surrounding trains - many Germans are incensed that the use of a mine to store radiological waste backfired when it flooded and the toxic wastes leaked into groundwater.

The OPG report suggests extensive negotiations will be needed with Canada's Indigenous People about hosting the nuclear waste site, but it does not delve into the legal issues related to land ownership and sovereignty.

And there is no mention of the possibility that earthquakes, fires, tornados or human error could limit access to the underground chambers. The Japanese are using robots and drones to access the Fukushima nuclear facility that was damaged in an earthquake six years ago, but have admitted defeat at trying to clean up the site, which is leaking into the Pacific. The Bruce site is located in an area where there is little seismic activity but not infrequent tornados.

OPG's report considers a time frame of a million years. To put that in context, it explains the crystalline rock of the Canadian Shield is more than a billion years old, and the sedimentary rock of southern Ontario is 354 million to 543 million years old. But wasn't it only 10,000 years ago that retreating ice sheets carved the Great Lakes' water basin? The report asserts no less than four times that "the proximity of a water body to the DGR is not relevant because the movement of water or gas, even if it was released from the DGR, would not reach the water body until the radioactivity of such water or gas had diminished to the levels generally found naturally occurring throughout Ontario."

While the radiological depletion rates are fairly certain, how can humans predict what could happen to a shaft hundreds of thousands of years from now - a shaft that OPG plans to abandon 30 years after it's built? Furthermore, no containers have been invented that will with certainty last hundreds of thousands of years. Arguably they might be some time in the future, but that would place an unfair burden on future generations to clean up our generation's mess.

OPG's report seems to conclude the waste site could, technically, be situated anywhere in the province's vast crystalline rock or sedimentary rock formations so long as it is accessible by road. The fact that hundreds of local residents around the Bruce site are supportive of the site locating there is heralded as an important deciding factor.

But what about outside the Kincardine area? By last September, 187 municipal resolutions had passed motions opposing OPG's plans, and hundreds of thousands of people had signed petitions. Twenty-three members of the U.S. Congress wrote Canada's foreign affairs minister urging Canada to explore options outside of the Great Lakes basin. Twelve U.S. representatives sent a bipartisan letter asking the Trump administration to stop OPG's proposal.

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Canada needs a neutral agency that helps citizens both in Canada and the U.S., understandably unfamiliar with the language of nuclear **power** and the concepts of geology, to analyse the **OPG** plan. The federal government must ensure fairness, transparency and openness in determining the plan's acceptability. Right now the federal cabinet has too much unilateral **power** to decide the issue.

Erika Simpson is an associate professor of international relations in the department of political science at Western University and the author of *NATO and the Bomb*.

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Panda: Canada should put a stop to importing oil | Calgary Herald

calgaryherald.com - Sun Mar 26 2017
Tone: **Neutral**

Alberta's oil is the best in the world, but Canada continues to import more than 245,000 barrels of oil per day from countries with brutal human rights and environmental records.

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Orillia audience hears about province's plan to lower hydro bills

Orillia Today - Fri Mar 24 2017
Tone: **Negative**
Byline: Frank Matys

Ad Value: \$737
Reach: 22244

Residents feeling burned by high **power** costs will enjoy some relief as the province flips the switch on a plan to cut **electricity** bills by an average of 25 per cent.

In a March 24 visit to the region, **Energy** Minister Glenn Thibeault vowed to implement the government's "fair **hydro** plan" this summer, while rejecting opposition claims that paint the move as a political ploy to curry favour with an angry public.

"For me, it was the right thing for us to do as a government," said Thibeault, who addressed a local audience at the Common Roof building, home to the Orillia Housing Resource Centre.

The planned reduction in **hydro** bills is welcome news to Nadine Ritchie, client services co-ordinator for the nonprofit organization serving residents who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

"We have seniors that are struggling, we have low-income families who are working or are on social assistance, and they are struggling to make ends meet just with the high cost of rent," she said.

Under the Liberal government's plan, households will receive an average 25 per cent break on **electricity** bills, with any increases held to the **rate** of inflation for four years.

The cut, which also applies to small businesses and farms, includes an eight per cent **rebate** introduced in January.

To bring the plan to bear, the province will refinance investments in nuclear reactors, **natural gas**-fired **power** plants and **wind** turbines, making lower payments over a longer period.

Doing so could reduce the cost of contracted generation by more than \$1.5 billion annually, officials say.

Critics argue the province will also spend billions more dollars in future interest payments. Progressive Conservative Leader Patrick Brown has dismissed the **hydro rate** slash as a "scheme," arguing the government was "borrowing money to make up for bad contracts."

Thibeault defended the plan.

"We are making sure that it's allowing us to lower the **rate** for everyone, (and) making sure that everyone that's going to utilize these assets actually helps pay for it," he said.

Decades of underinvestment resulted in a need to put more than \$50 billion into generation, transmission and distribution to ensure the system is reliable, the province said in explaining the high **rates** that have angered Ontarians.

Eliminating coal in favour of clean, renewable **power** created additional costs, as have programs supporting rural and low-income customers.

Under coming changes, initiatives such as the Ontario **Electricity** Support Program will be expanded and funded by the government instead of **ratepayers**.

"It only makes sense that we share the costs through provincial revenues by making sure no one in our community has to make those difficult decisions between heating their home and feeding their family," said Barrie MPP Ann Hoggarth.

A new affordability fund, accessible by local utilities, will assist customers who do not qualify for low-income conservation programs.

While new measures are anticipated to cost the government up to \$2.5 billion over three years, the province continues to project a balanced budget for 2017-18.

- With files from Chris Simon

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NUGGET

Health care hydro costs concern city; Province lobbied to provide rate relief to hospitals

North Bay Nugget - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Ad Value: \$1,303

Reach: 12127 Page: A1 / Front

North Bay's municipal politicians have agreed to lobby the province to provide **hydro rate** relief to cashstrapped hospitals.

But some council members believe the city also should be calling on the Liberal government to extend relief to other users, such as municipalities, universities and school boards.

"This resolution speaks only to North Bay Regional Health Centre," said Coun.

Mac Bain, who was reluctant to support a motion this week seeking the same **rate** relief for hospitals that's been promised to residential and small business customers.

Bain said the motion, tabled by councillors Mike Anthony and Jeff Serran, doesn't go far enough, noting there's no mention of Nipissing University or Canadore College, the city, or others which also don't qualify for the any of the recent **hydro** reductions announced by the province.

That includes an eight per cent **rebate** that took effect in January and an additional 17 per cent break that's coming in June.

"This resolution, I think, doesn't go far enough," said Bain.

Coun. Chris Mayne made similar remarks, noting that Cassellholme Home for the Aged saw its **electricity** costs spike this year by \$100,000. But, he said, there was no additional money from the province to help offset that increase. The motion was ultimately amended to include other health-care facilities, such as long-term care homes. And there was some talk at the council table about a future motion specific to others within the MUSH (municipalities, universities and school boards and hospitals) sector.

The motion comes in response to recent news that North Bay Regional Health Centre is cutting 30 to 40 more jobs to head off a forecasted deficit of \$5-million for 2017/18.

Hydro costs are only one of the financial pressures the hospital faces, along with arbitrated wage increases worth \$2 million and increases to staff health benefits, specifically long-term disability insurance in the amount of \$1.7 million.

The health centre is projecting a 12 per cent increase - about \$200,000 - in **energy** costs between this year and next.

Meanwhile, **hydro** costs at Health Sciences North have risen close to \$1 million over the past five years, even as Sudbury's hospital cut **power** consumption by nine per cent over the same period.

That's according to documents obtained by the NDP under Ontario's Freedom of Information laws.

"Health care is at a tipping point in Ontario," NDP Leader Andrea Horwath said in a release. "There have already been frontline workers laid off at many hospitals. And with skyrocketing **hydro** bills, hospitals are being squeezed tighter.

"It's clear that **hydro** costs are hurting families in more ways than one - it's hurting people every month when the bill comes, but it's also hurting the services we count on, like hospitals, schools and city services like community centres."

Health Sciences North is not the only hospital to experience soaring **hydro** rates, according to the opposition NDP and Progressive Conservatives. Across the province: The Sault Area Hospital's **electricity** bills increased by \$800,000 or 45 per cent over a four-year period.

The Timmins and District Hospital is expecting to pay \$1.2 million for **hydro** this year. Five years ago, the hospital was paying \$825,000 a year on **hydro**.

The Collingwood General & Marine Hospital saw a 35 per cent increase in its **hydro** costs. In 2015, Collingwood projected a \$1-million operating deficit.

The Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) in Barrie is expecting a \$200,000 increase in its **energy** bill.

Windsor Regional Hospital's **hydro** bills have increased by 32 per cent over a four-year period. In total, the hospital is paying \$5 million a year on **hydro** costs. With files from Postmedia

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A lot more to be answered; Ontario Power Generation's latest report on its proposed nuclear waste chamber near Lake Huron focuses on science, which leaves a lot of issues unaddressed

Niagara Falls Review - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Erika Simpson

Ad Value: \$1,124

Reach: 11236 **Page:** A7

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Fortune Teller

Toronto Sun - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Larry Poulin

Ad Value: \$635

Reach: 143813 **Page:** A16

Re "Tories can't pull plug on Grit ad campaign" (Shawn Jeffords, March 22): In my 60 years of living in Ontario, I have never seen a Liberal government be so arrogant. From Mr. **Chiarelli** telling the auditor general "the **electricity** system is very complex" to Premier Wynne taking out self-congratulatory ads saying "We've heard you" and we are listening and making changes. So I'm led to believe they haven't heard us for the past decade? The Maple Leafs should have an ad saying they won the Stanley Cup. If Premier Wynne can tell the future, so should the Leafs.

LARRY POULIN DUNSFORD, ONT.

(Indeed, the Liberals act as if their **hydro** problem is solved when the fact is they aren't actually lowering **rates** until June 1)

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Kxl Ok; Pipeline Wins 'Historic' Trump Approval, But The Battle Isn'T Over Just Yet

National Post - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Claudia Cattaneo

Ad Value: \$7,564

Reach: 185480 **Page:** FP1 / Front

For the past decade or so, pipeline activism had a good run. Friday's approval by U.S. President Donald Trump of the Alberta-Texas Keystone XL pipeline, during an extraordinary White House moment for TransCanada Corp. chief executive Russ Girling, confirms that as a movement its heyday has come and

A key reason is that government leaders are no longer caving in, having realized that the majority stands behind them.

"I know the voters appreciate this, some of them expressed it very, very strongly, and the workers definitely appreciate it," Trump said in approving the long-delayed presidential permit, as Girling, who endured years of personal attacks, lawsuits and political footdragging, stood nearby.

Trump was echoing the findings of countless opinion polls in the U.S. and Canada that consistently showed support for the project.

Some activists argue Trump's approval of KXL was expected since he's so connected to the oil industry.

Yet even in Canada, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, British Columbia's Christy Clark and Alberta Premier Rachel Notley have taken the side of pipelines, despite facing enormous pushback from environmentalists to deny permits. Trudeau and Notley, in particular, are no oil lovers.

In a statement after Trump's announcement, however, Notley congratulated TransCanada "for the hard work they put into this approval."

"While Keystone XL progresses, we are also going to continue our work to make sure we can get Alberta's resources to Canadian tidewater - creating jobs, helping our **energy** industry grow and diversifying our export markets," Notley said.

British Columbia's coming provincial election, for which environmentalists are mobilizing to defeat Clark for her support of Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain pipeline, will be another test of whether the movement has any remaining political capital, or whether voters have become so desensitized to its hyperbole and antics they have moved on.

Like Keystone XL, other major high profile projects targeted for obstruction are moving forward. The Dakota Access pipeline is being filled and **Energy** Transfer Partners LP, the majority owner, plans to begin shipping oil in the first half of the year.

Enbridge Inc.'s Line 3 replacement program is on track for completion in 2019. Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain pipeline has renewed shipping commitments and is aiming for completion in 2019.

To be sure, one project has been shelved, Enbridge's Northern Gateway pipeline, and one project remains in play, TransCanada's **Energy** East, but the pipeline bottlenecks are being removed and a sense of normalcy is returning to the oil business.

But there's still plenty of room for disruption. Trans Mountain alone is fighting a dozen lawsuits. In the case of Keystone, there are more hurdles in Nebraska, where the pipeline still needs to get state permits, a process expected to take eight months. Activists are promising legal challenges, too.

To be sure, pipeline activism has been successful in delaying projects, increasing costs and bringing uncertainty to the business. It's also caused divisions that will take years to mend. Canada's oilsands have seen the departure of important international players.

But as a way to deter fossil fuel production, it's been a failure. As widely predicted, investment has simply moved to paths with less resistance.

From Canada's north, capital has poured into tight oil in the United States, which is much closer to activists' own backyards. The assets sold by multinationals have been purchased by Canadian companies, which will continue to grow them.

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Keystone XL pipeline gets an OK from Trump; But White House approval doesn't clear the way from pending lawsuits and protests

Toronto Star · Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: The Canadian Press

Ad Value: \$12,149

Reach: 500678 **Page:** A14

Canada's hotly debated, long-delayed Keystone XL pipeline received its elusive U.S. presidential permit from Donald Trump on Friday, eight years and six months after the initial application for it to cross the American border.

The president made the announcement at the White House.

He was accompanied by the president of TransCanada Corp., the Calgary-based pipeline company that has wrestled with lawsuits, resistant landowners, protesters and Washington Democrats.

"You've been waiting for a long, long time," Trump said to TransCanada's Russ Girling.

"It's a great day for American jobs and a historic moment for North America and **energy** independence. This announcement is part of a new era of American **energy** policy that will lower costs for American families, . . . reduce our dependence on foreign oil and create thousands of jobs."

That doesn't guarantee the pipeline gets built.

That's because the removal of one big obstacle in Washington hasn't done anything to eliminate other ones still sprinkled around the American Midwest, where opponents still hope to drown the project in protests and lawsuits.

The likely epicentre of the coming battle is Nebraska, the very place where opposition to Keystone began, years ago.

TransCanada must still reach deals with some landowners there, it lacks a state permit and faces possible court challenges there and in South Dakota.

The markets demonstrated their skepticism by yawning at Friday's news: TransCanada's share value crept up barely one per cent, and hasn't increased from its October price before Trump was elected.

Keystone opponents swiftly linked their cause to the broader anti-Trump movement.

"This isn't game over, it's game on," Stephen Kretzmann, executive director of Oil Change International, said in a statement that insulted Trump.

"Now we have a president who is deeply beholden to the oil industry and will do anything they ask, so this approval is no surprise. . . . Put your tiny hands in the air, Trump, and back away from the **climate**."

Trump, meanwhile, has been eager to talk about projects like Keystone.

His young presidency has been consumed lately by problematic issues: an unpopular health reform and Russian election-meddling. Even as he made the Keystone announcement, reporters in the Oval Office shouted questions about the potential collapse of the health bill. At that very moment, networks were carrying a congressional committee announcement that Trump's former campaign manager would be questioned in its Russia probe.

Trump says he wants to move onto jobs and the economy.

Keystone XL would mean thousands of temporary construction jobs and a permanent, annual boost in tax revenues for communities along the route, which would stretch from Canada to an already completed southern portion now pumping oil to refineries on the Gulf of Mexico.

It's unclear if construction could start this year.

The Nebraska permit alone could take up to eight months, said Canada's Natural Resources Minister Jim Carr. He welcomed the U.S. announcement, but pointed out the process is far from over.

"We in Canada know that pipeline decisions can be controversial," Carr told reporters in Ottawa. "(But) you would assume that these approvals would lead to a completed pipeline project. We think this is a good day for the Canada-U.S. **energy** relationship."

He declined to say whether a completed Keystone would enter the calculus of whether the country needs another, larger project from TransCanada. Carr said the **Energy** East plan to move oil to the Atlantic Coast is undergoing an independent review.

U.S. regulators conducted their own, favourable reviews before politicians stepped in.

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C-K stands to rake in turbine cash; Not all councillors support investment

Sarnia Observer - Sat Mar 25 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Byline: Ellwood Shreve

Ad Value: \$678

Reach: 13691 Page: A5

The Municipality of Chatham is doling out nearly \$8 million in tax dollars for a chance to get a share of the profits generated from **wind** turbines.

Adding this kind money to municipal coffers would normally be welcomed by any politician, but not when it involves **wind** turbines.

Chatham-Kent council this week voted to approve spending \$7.74 million to have the **electrical** utility Entegrus - owned 90 per cent by the municipality - exercise its option to buy a 15 per cent equity interest in the North Kent 1 **Wind Turbine** project, soon to be built north of Chatham.

However, it was not supported by everyone.

Wallaceburg Coun. Jeff Wesley voted against the project due to concerns raised that vibrations from the construction and operation of the **wind** farm will damage water wells.

"I had a moral dilemma, because I did not feel comfortable that we should be investing in a **wind** project until we have sorted out what is actually going on with the water wells in Chatham-Kent," he said.

Wesley noted his vote against investing in the project was not a reflection of Entegrus.

There was only a brief discussion on the report when it came before Chatham-Kent council on Monday.

However, Chatham Coun. Michael Bondy was the only councillor who expressed his intention to not support it during the meeting.

Bondy said his decision is "based on the principle that I think we have enough **wind** turbines in our municipality."

He added the turbines hasn't helped **electricity** bills.

The report that was in the council package estimates the \$7.74-million investment could generate a return of \$17 million over 20 years.

South Kent Coun. Trevor Thompson, among the majority of who supported the investment, said the issue wasn't about whether the municipality wants turbines or not.

"That project is going ahead, so the question is: 'How much money do you want to make off them?' he said.

"For me, the answer is: 'As much as we can,'" he added.

Thompson said this isn't spending \$8 million in taxpayers' money, "this is investing \$8 million and getting a good return on it."

He noted this is money that can be used for such purposes as reducing the tax burden or improving services, adding residents will let council know how they want that money spent.

Thompson said he has heard from a few people opposed to this investment "simply because they don't like turbines."

Entegrus CEO and president Jim Hogan said, "this is the first time we're an actual partner, an investor in the **wind** project."

He said in 2015 when the North Kent **Wind** group was seeking support for the project from Chatham-Kent, one of the things the municipality was able to negotiate was the opportunity to have an investment in the **wind** project.

"It is a good opportunity for us to grow our revenue and to give some money back to the community," Hogan said.

He noted options have also been negotiated to invest in the Otter Creek and Romney **wind** farm projects currently in the works.

"We haven't started any negotiations, we haven't started looking at any of the returns, so we don't know if we're going to do that," Hogan said.

Jane Wilson, president of **Wind** Concerns Ontario, a citizen group opposed to industrial **wind** turbines, said she doesn't know of any other municipality that has invested millions of dollars in **wind** farm.

She believes it is "short-sighted" for a municipality to look at what financial benefit it can gain from a **wind turbine** project.

Citing the "mounting **energy** poverty" related to the cost the province has incurred for its green **energy** program, she said, "it really seems to be flying in the face of what people are feeling and thinking right now (about **wind** turbines)." eshreve@postmedia.com

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Notley: KXL does not lessen need for Energy East, expanded Trans Mountain | Metro Calgary

www.metronews.ca - Fri Mar 24 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Alberta Premier Rachel Notley says U.S. approval of the Keystone XL pipeline does not lessen the need for two other controversial proposals within Canada's borders.

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