

Neil Brodie

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Question Period

Energy policies

Mr. Todd Smith: My question this morning is for the Acting Premier. The Ontario Liberals' failed and destructive energy policy means that almost 600 people in Sudbury could be on the verge of having their power cut off. They may have banned winter disconnections, but years of disastrous electricity policy that has caused hydro bills to go up by 300% means that, for thousands of Ontarians, the bills keep piling up.

Why is the Premier continually making the millionaires' club at Hydro One bigger, when people in Sudbury and other communities across the province are having to choose between paying their grocery bill or paying their electricity bill?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: It was our government that brought forward last winter our legislation that bans winter disconnections. We've worked with all utilities to make sure that that happened. Now that that ban is ending for many of these utilities—not all, but for some—we're continuing to work with individuals to let them know about the programs that are there—the ones that we put in place, the ones that they voted against—that help low-income individuals, that help First Nations individuals and that make sure seniors can save more money on their electricity bills. Those are the things that we did to actually help.

We rebuilt the system. We made it affordable. We made it clean, and it is reliable. It is something that they actually voted against continuously and we will continue to advocate for, and work on, on behalf of the people of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Todd Smith: The minister gets up and he bellows about all of the plans that are in place. But do you know why those plans are necessary, Mr. Speaker? It's because of the disastrous energy policy of this minister and this government over the last 15 years. We have amongst the highest hydro prices in all of North America. That's why they've got to put in this unfair hydro plan. If it's so fair, how come thousands of Ontarians can't afford to pay their electricity bills and are about to get cut off? Mr. Speaker, what is the government going to do for those people?

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: We've made sure that we brought forward the fair hydro plan, which I know that they're actually using because they had no plan. Our plan is so good that they're keeping it, and I understand that.

We're going to continue to find programs that will work to help people, because under this government, we've never had a blackout that lasted three days. Under that government, they did.

Do you know what, Mr. Speaker? We've made sure that we have invested in a system that is now reliable, clean and affordable. There is no more coal being used in our electricity grid. We are 96% GHG-free. And I know they want to change that. I know they want to change that because, you know what, Mr. Speaker, they have no plan and they have no ideas. All they do is meet with developers in the backroom and talk about paving things over, rather than thinking about the people of Ontario.