

Bill 197, Affordable Electricity Act, 2018

Introduced by Jack MacLaren (Independent) on February 21, 2018.

Explanatory Note

The Act imposes a duty on the Minister of Energy to ensure that residents and small businesses in Ontario have access to clean electricity at the lowest possible cost, and sets out several requirements that must be met by December 31, 2018, in order for that duty to be fulfilled. Those requirements include: maximizing the use of large-scale renewables (hydro & nuclear); put in place a transparent competitive process to procure electricity, eliminate subsidies for renewables; cancel all conservation program subsidies; prohibit price reductions financed by debt and allow Ontario residents the right of first refusal to purchase electricity at the export price when power is offered to export markets.

With respect to regulation of the electricity system the Bill proposes:

1. Maintaining the grid in an efficient state
2. Benchmark costs
3. Transparency on costs to operate the grid
4. Any cost savings as a result of this Bill be returned to customers
5. Removing every restriction that limits the ability of a potential supplier of electricity to use the grid to transport electricity to any willing customer
6. Balancing the cost to use the grid with the cost of the grid

The Bill wraps up with two measures regarding the actual electricity bill. Electricity bills are to include the deferred cost of the Fair Hydro Plan and itemize the portion of the bill that deals with the repayment of sunk costs together with the year the sunk cost was incurred.