



# Hansard Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

38th Parliament

## JOHN YAKABUSKI, M.P.P. - RENFREW-NIPISSING-PEMBROKE

October 20, 2005

Response to Ministry Statement

### Hydro Rebates

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** I'm pleased to respond to the statement by the Minister of Energy. I was at that press conference earlier today. You know, if the minister could have found a chimney on the media studio, I'm sure she would have descended by it, because she sauntered in there like she was Santa Claus. She thought she was doing such a wonderful thing. Do you know what she is doing? She is telling the hard-working people of the province of Ontario who pay electricity bills, "After 16 long months, we're going to give you your money back. However, we have been pleased to treat you as a new lending institution in the province of Ontario. Thank you so much for your money, but it's paid back without interest."

I wonder, if those hard-working Ontarians were 16 months late paying their hydro bill, if they'd fare so well as the minister, who can simply say, "Here it is. Sorry we're late. You're lucky to get it. I'm Santa Claus."

She says she's removing the politics from electricity. What justifies this kind of announcement? You're paying back the money you owe. You're not giving anybody anything.

Even the minister of revenue doesn't stand up on April 30 and say, "Ladies and gentlemen of Canada, I want to tell you that starting tomorrow I'm sending out your income tax refund." It's your money, you are entitled to get it back, and this minister makes it sound like it's coming out of her jeans.

Good Lord, show some respect for hard-working Ontarians who have seen their livelihoods hurt by the policies of this government: higher taxes, punitive taxes, higher fees and energy costs, and getting less in the way of services from this government.

So what do we do? We have a media conference to tell you, "What great news. The money we've been keeping" -- they must be keeping it in a can or a mattress, because, "We have no interest to give you. We've kept it for all this time, but lucky you. Here, in late October, just about when the winter heating season is coming, we've got a little cheque for you in the mail."

Thank you very much, Minister, but please, next time, pay the money you owe on time.