



Legislative Assembly

JOHN YAKABUSKI, MPP
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NEWS RELEASE

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Yakabuski Demands Plan to Keep Ontario's Lights On

Queen's Park, Toronto – PC Party Energy Critic, MPP John Yakabuski, questioned Energy Minister Donna Cansfield in the Legislature this afternoon, asking about her contingency plans in the event that Calpine Corporation declares bankruptcy. Industry analysts are predicting that Calpine Corporation, that is contracted to build a 1,005-megawatt natural gas power plant in Sarnia-Lambton, will pull out of their contract. The Minister had previously stated this plant would make up 11% of the energy lost by closing Ontario's coal-fired plants.

Yakabuski asked, "What is your backup plan to ensure that the lights stay on, given your poorly conceived plan to shut down Ontario's coal-fired stations?" Yakabuski went on to say that the Liberal Government's entire scheme to phase out coal-fired energy plants has been one bungle after another. "They announced a series of RFPs for alternatives to coal. Then in August of this year it was announced that the 280-megawatt Greenfield North Power project in Mississauga will not proceed. The 570-megawatt Invenergy project in Sarnia was refused rezoning by St. Clair Township in October. The city of Thunder Bay is calling for an environmental assessment of the natural gas pipeline for the 310-megawatt Thunder Bay generating station. Now Calpine's 1,005 megawatts is in serious jeopardy."

Minister Cansfield's response weighed heavy on the fact that she had personally spoken by telephone to the President of Mitsui, a company that is partnered with Calpine, who assured her that Calpine's financial problems will not affect the Sarnia project.

Two of Calpine's top executives have been ousted as the company struggles to repay a \$17-billion debt and the shares and bonds dropped to record lows over concern the power plant owner will be seeking bankruptcy protection.

"Calpine is part of the McGuinty Liberals' disastrous electricity scheme, which started with a poorly-conceived promise to shut down all coal-fired energy production by 2007, followed by a series of ever-changing announcements about new energy projects that are supposed to replace coal-fired plants," said Yakabuski. "Assurances from a partnered corporation do not provide Ontarians with great comfort."