



Legislative Assembly

JOHN YAKABUSKI, MPP Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke NEWS RELEASE

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MCGUINTY LIBERALS MUST COME CLEAN ON GREEN *PC MPPs want truth on energy prices, why the Liberals won't hold public hearings*

(Queen's Park) – Dalton McGuinty and George Smitherman are not being up front or honest about the financial impact of their new Green Energy Act for the average Ontario family, Progressive Conservative Energy Critic John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke) said today.

“This legislation raises many more questions than it answers. We need to know how much Dalton McGuinty's legislation is going to jack up energy costs for the average Ontario family, but as usual Mr. McGuinty and his Minister can't give us a straightforward answer,” said Yakabuski.

Yakabuski asked both McGuinty and Smitherman how much the cost of electricity will go up, noting that in other countries with similar legislation, the cost of energy is now three times what it is here. Despite asking eight questions, neither Mr. McGuinty nor his Minister provided a single answer.

Yakabuski noted that Smitherman put the cost of the bill at \$5 billion. With 4.2 million electricity consumers in Ontario footing that bill, it pans out to an extra \$1,200 per consumer. Over three years, that equals a 30 per cent increase – not the one per cent increase Smitherman promised yesterday, said Yakabuski.

“Ontarians were not fooled when Stéphane Dion tried to tell them that his Green Shift plan wasn't going to cost them a thing, and they're not going to be fooled by your plan,” Yakabuski told Smitherman in the Legislature.

PC House Leader Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo) questioned Dalton McGuinty on why his government is trying to fast-track the bill.

“We have some very real concerns about the way this bill is being rammed through the Legislature without following the proper democratic channels,” said Witmer. “It is a bill with sweeping changes that will affect many Ontarians. They deserve a chance to speak out, but the McGuinty Liberals are silencing their voices.”

Both Witmer and Yakabuski urged the Liberals to bring the large and complex bill to committee before second reading to allow for a public discourse sooner rather than later. They pointed to the precedent set by former Liberal Energy Minister Dwight Duncan, who allowed Bill 100 – another sweeping energy bill – to go before committee after first reading.

“When Ontarians are done paying for their mortgages, food, clothing and now higher electricity prices, they’re not going to have much left for anything else,” said Yakabuski. “We need to know now what the cost of electricity is going to be on behalf of consumers, families, seniors and low-income Ontarians – people who can hardly afford the electricity bills they’re paying now.”

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