



# Hansard Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

39th Parliament

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

Oral Question

March 3, 2009

### Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, in your answer today you said that you're looking forward to constructive suggestions as to how you could improve this bill. We're going to give you one right now.

Will you consider an amendment that would remove the mandatory provisions in your energy audit bill and make it voluntary instead of shoving it down the throats of homeowners and seniors who can least afford the \$300 cost? Will you consider, Premier, an amendment that will remove the mandatory provision of your energy audit bill?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** My honourable colleague knows this is a matter for consideration by the committee. I expect that through committee there will be a number of proposals that will be put forward to strengthen the bill. We look forward to considering those various proposals and to making changes that the committee, in its wisdom, deems appropriate to enhance the quality of the bill.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** We're looking forward to that, but I'd certainly like some sort of commitment today, Premier. When you look at the broad-brush approach, for example, your mandatory energy audit applies to homes that may be less than a year or two years old. It puts everything under one broad brush.

We're asking you for a reasonable amendment: Remove the mandatory provision of this audit, as it is unwieldy, it is unfair to seniors, it is unfair to those people who are losing their homes through no fault of their own but that they cannot afford to keep the home, let alone a \$300 tax bill by your government.

I'm asking you again: Will you remove the mandatory provision of this audit and make it voluntary, as we are suggesting?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I think I addressed that pretty explicitly in my first response, but I want to remind my honourable colleague about the commitment they made on page 48 of their platform. I want you to know that this issue of the energy audit was not to be optional. It specifically says, "We will require home energy audits before every sale of a house so that the market will reward homes which are energy-efficient." There was no sense of any option. There's no sense that this might be something a seller might want to consider. It was going to be a requirement.

Again, we look forward to giving this full consideration, because apparently they've changed their minds over there. I think we should give this full consideration at the committee.