



Hansard Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

39th Parliament

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

New Energy Tax

Hansard – Mar 23

Mr. John Yakabuski: My question is for the Acting Premier. Yesterday, you said that the budget won't have new taxes, but on the same day, Enbridge and Union Gas representatives told the general government committee that the McGuinty Liberals want to slap the new energy tax on home heating bills.

You've been found out about your secret back-door tax on hydro. Are the McGuinty Liberals going to tax home heating fuel, too?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: To the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure.

Hon. Brad Duguid: The member again comes to this House, just like yesterday when he came to the Legislature and said that a regulation wasn't on the registry. Obviously, he could not find it himself through his own computer. Now that his leader has a new website, I'm going to suggest that his leader perhaps give him directions as to how to get onto that website, because he may need them.

Getting back to the member's question: No, we have not made any decisions to move forward with any allocations with regard to the gas industries. We're always looking for ways to conserve. It's the best possible way for us to get the best value for consumers. We'll continue to work with all partners in the energy sector on ways to provide better conservation initiatives. But the answer is no.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Well, well, well. This wasn't the first time that Dalton McGuinty said something different than one of his ministers. It wasn't even the first time yesterday.

Minister Duguid twisted himself in knots, saying the back-door energy tax wasn't a tax before the Premier said in fact it is a tax. The energy minister said it was a one-year deal, but later the Premier said he's looking for ways to keep gouging Ontario seniors and families on their energy bills.

Enbridge and Union Gas said you're eyeing them next, that "there have been a number of meetings" and "in terms of actual costs, that hasn't been determined at this time."

How much more will Ontario seniors and families pay because of the Liberals' tax on home heating fuel?

Hon. Brad Duguid: The fact of the matter is-and if this member understood what conservation does-these initiatives will save consumers money. They will help us avoid having to make much-

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I remind the member from Renfrew that he just asked a question. I can't hear the answer. Obviously, you can't either.

Hon. Brad Duguid: These initiatives will save consumers money. They help us avoid much more costly further investments in energy infrastructure and maintenance. They help us avoid having to make even more expansion of our green energy initiatives.

This is the most cost-effective way to handle our energy supply challenges. The member doesn't understand that. It doesn't come out of the blue. It was very much part of the Green Energy Act. If the member had read the act, he would have looked at section 26.1 and known that this was an initiative that this Legislature passed some time-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.