

Debunking the Negative Political Rhetoric on Renewable Energy in the Ontario Election Campaign.



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The Ontario Citizen's Coalition for Clean Affordable Energy (OCCCAE) challenges Tim Hudak's claim that \$20 billion can be saved annually by cutting financial support from the province for wind and solar.

"That is impossible, says Michel Fortin, Executive Director of OCCCAE (pronounced Okay) "The entire annual cost of electricity generation, delivery and conservation for Ontario is between \$13 and \$16 billion. Because claims such as these were not challenged in the past, the entire renewable energy sector gets stigmatized as being too expensive, and that is just not the case."

The Tories have maintained, since their 2011 attack on the 80¢ /kWh paid for solar power, that the renewable energy programs established by the *Green Energy and Green Economy Act (Ontario)* (the "GEA") were making the average home electricity costs increase.

"Actually, the 80¢ /kWh impact on the average monthly bill was less than a fraction of 1¢" says Fortin. "Wind and solar represent approximately 5% of total generation in Ontario. How can this make our electricity bills increase at the levels claimed? The total impact of the Feed-In Tariff program under the GEA, which includes large wind and solar projects that receive much lower rates, is less than \$1.50 on the monthly bill of the average household, according to the numbers from the Environmental Commissioner".

Further, adjustments to the renewable energy programs under the GEA have resulted in the 80¢ price paid 2 years ago being lowered by 50% to 39.6¢ and will continue to decrease. Renewables are the only form of energy that is going down in price.

If electricity prices go up, it is not because of renewables. It will be because the electricity infrastructure needs upgrading, the cost of maintaining the province's nuclear power generation capacity and because of costs associated with the 20 plus gas plants added to the system to eliminate coal generation. Removing coal generation is to save the province \$4.4 billion in health care and related costs according to the Ministry of Health.

The claims made by Tim Hudak during the last election were left unchallenged. Consequently, the fallacy regarding the 80¢ /kWh paid to homeowners, farmers and small business for the solar energy generation stigmatized the entire renewable energy sector. The \$20 billion in savings claimed during this election will further stigmatize renewable energy given that price decreases may present the better long-term energy mix scenario for Ontario. The claims need to be challenged and put into perspective.

Mr. Hudak indicated that if elected, he would advance the nuclear program with new nuclear power plants, which will move the province further into debt and increase electricity costs. In addition, the costs related to nuclear, that need the backing of the province for financing, will affect Ontario's debt load and bond ratings. So how does Mr. Hudak expect to bring electricity costs down by eliminating renewables while drastically increasing expenditures for nuclear?

Consider the following figures:

- \$1.5 to \$2.1 billion for "planning" Darlington refurbishment (currently at OEB hearings).
- \$12.9 billion for the 4 Darlington reactors. Ontario Clean Air Alliance estimate: \$21 to \$35 billion.
- \$12 billion* for the 6 Bruce reactors. *no official estimate yet: the 2 recent refurbished reactors cost \$4.8 billion up from \$2.75 billion estimate (6 x 2 billion).
- \$15 to \$26 billion for two new reactors. (The Liberal's cancelled October 2013. A Federal judge ruled against environmental assessment May 2014).
- \$180 million already spent for the estimates and hearings for the new reactors.
- \$2 billion for the intermediate waste site in Kindardine. (Greatly opposed on the US side).
- \$16 billion for the long term waste which is sitting in pools at each nuclear site (price estimate is from the Nuclear Waste Management Organization's 2005 plan, Northwatch: \$24 billion).

**decommissioning, accidents, insurance, etc not included*

Quick tally – **\$59.6 billion** low-end estimate. Historically, nuclear projects cost 2.5 times the estimated cost according to Ontario Clean Air Alliance. If so, this will push **Ontario's costs over the \$100 billion** mark.

The Ontario Citizens Coalition for Clean Affordable Energy is a group of concerned citizens who seek the truth on energy cost claims, especially during election campaigns, and aims to de-politicize the energy planning process in the province.