



## Electricity: Big corporate consumers get price breaks, we pay the bills

During the 2018 election campaign, Doug Ford promised to cut electricity costs to Ontario households by 12 per cent.

He didn't and after his 2022 re-election still hadn't. Instead, he slashed the electricity bills for the province's largest industrial users, shifting the costs to the rest of us. Starting in January, 2021 the government's Comprehensive Electricity Plan forced the public at large to pay part of the electricity bills of some of the biggest companies. In its 2022 budget the Ford government bragged that it was "lowering electricity costs by 15-17 per cent in 2022 for medium sized and industrial customers." Over the course of three years our taxes will be used to provide \$1,500,000,000 in electricity price relief to big business.<sup>1</sup>

There is both insult and injury here. A government committed to acting on the climate emergency would do the exact opposite of what Ontario has been doing. For instance, the largest electricity users would, through persuasion and regulation, address their energy inefficiencies in order to reduce their electricity bills. But Ford's message has been not to fret about energy efficiency. Use as much as you want. Not to worry – Ontario residents will help foot the bill.

Similarly, a government committed to climate action would help households to switch from fossil fuel heating systems to those based on electricity. This would be accomplished, in part, by making hydro rates an attractive alternative to oil and gas prices. But Ford has said tough luck to the people. A privatized Ontario Hydro (Ontario Power Generation) and the huge financial burden of nuclear power dictate otherwise.

The government argues helping large business will in turn help to kick start the economy. The big users argue that the rate cuts will boost job creation. Their lobby group, the Association of Major Power Customers of Ontario, is dedicated to pressing government to reduce their hydro bills. AMPCO's website boasts that it "has unparalleled access to important players in the electricity sector."

AMPCO is pleased with the Ford handouts. Their bold claim is that "Most people don't mind paying a little more at home if they're able to make sure they have a job to go to."<sup>2</sup>

This isn't the first time Ford has acted in the interests of big corporations and against the climate. Big electricity users are often big carbon emitters. Ford is giving them a free ride on their emissions as well.

<sup>1</sup> Ontario Budget 2022

<sup>2</sup> AMPCO.org



## ***The People First, Climate First Alternative:***

**!** Instead of lowering electricity bills for big business Ford could cut the costs of electricity for the rest of us and respond to the climate crisis

**!** A government that put people and the climate first could negotiate long term contracts for lower-priced Quebec electricity

**!** Require the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) to regulate the profits of private power suppliers

**!** Prioritize conservation and home retrofit programs.

**SENIORS  
for  
CLIMATE  
ACTION!  
NOW** ●

