

## What can be done?

I read with interest the letter from Carmine Marcello, President and CEO of Hydro One, regarding to his apology for the actions of Customer Service and erroneous billing. Upon receiving a number of different complaints from various parts of Ontario the Ontario Landowners Association was asked to see what we could find out pertaining to the electricity issue in Ontario. It would seem there is far more problems with the Ministry of Energy, Ontario Energy Board (OEB), Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation (OPG) than merely the 'billing system'.

The Ministry of Energy, OEB, OPG and Hydro One may be in violation of the Electricity Act, S.O. 1998 where it states that the purposes of the Act are:

Purposes

1. The purposes of this Act are,

(f) to protect the interests of consumers with respect to prices and the adequacy, reliability and quality of electricity service;

With 'Time Of Use' pricing it would seem that the 'purpose' is not being implemented.

According to the Debates in the Legislative Assembly, 1946 it was explained, by the MPP Hon. G. H. Challies, that Ontarians were only to pay cost for electricity and that there could be an annual adjustment based on cost, implemented. He said: 'Electrical energy, once a luxury, has, in Ontario, been so reduced in costs that it has become a common commodity for the service of all. It is the power of the people, made usable for the people, by the people.'

With electricity to be sold at 'cost' and we have found Ontarians are being gouged. According to MPP Tabuns, 'Ontario usually sells its electricity for about three cents per kilowatt-hour, but pays the generator of that power about eight cents per kilowatt-hour.' Ontarians are presently paying: Peak hours: 12.90 cents/kWh, Mid-Peak hours: 10.9 cents/kWh, Off-Peak hours: 7.2 cents/kWh. He goes on to say:

'We found that last year Ontario subsidized power to people in the United States and Quebec and Manitoba to the tune of over \$1 billion. That's the equivalent of cancelling two gas plants.' Could this not be considered discriminatory pricing?

Based on this information might this also be a violation of section 92A of the Constitution, which states:

Laws respecting non-renewable natural resources, forestry resources and electrical energy

92A. (1) In each province, the legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to:

*Export from provinces of resources*

(2) and the production from facilities in the province for the generation of electrical energy, but such laws may not authorize or provide for discrimination in prices or in supplies exported to another part of Canada.

The Ontario Ombudsman, Andre Marin, who is investigating billing and customer service complaints stated: 'People wake up with \$10,000 or \$20,000 skimmed off their bank account by error, they didn't owe that money'. Anyone else who had 'skimmed' money from someone else's account would certainly be charged for theft or fraud, so will the Executive of Hydro One or OPG be charged?

What can be done? We can all write to the Ombudsman asking for a complete criminal investigation into Hydro One, OPG, the OEB and the Ministry of Energy.

For more information on the report done by the Ontario Landowners Association please go to [www.ontariolandowners.ca](http://www.ontariolandowners.ca) or call 1-877-258-6108, and don't forget the rally on April 4th, 2014 which information can be found on Facebook at ?Join the fight against Hydro rates?.

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