



June 18, 2015

Jeff Leal, MPP
236 King Street
Peterborough, Ontario
K9J 7L8

Via e-mail: jleal.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

Re: Accountability and transparency at a privatized Hydro One

Dear Mr. Leal:

A member of my union has forwarded me a letter from you regarding your government's plan to sell 60 per cent of Hydro One. After reading the letter I felt it required a response.

Your assertion that the Wynne government is taking action to maintain transparency and shield electricity ratepayers from the negative effects of privatization is, I am sorry to say, laughable.

Changing Hydro One from a public entity run in the public interest to a private entity whose primary motivation is profit maximization is a profound change. It can only create pressures to reduce service and increase prices for electricity customers. How this will play out is unclear, but one thing is for sure: few Ontarians have any faith in your government's commitment to standing up to Bay Street investors.

With respect to transparency and accountability, all I can say is that never in my memory has a provincial government done anything that offended all of the province's independent watchdogs at once. The Auditor General won't be auditing the new Hydro One. The Ombudsman won't be investigating public complaints about it. The Financial Accountability Officer won't be able to review the company's plans for future operational changes. Citizens won't be able to get information about Hydro One through the Freedom of Information process. Hydro One will not be covered under the *Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act*. It won't be subject to the *French Language Services Act*.

In essence, your government's plan to privatize Hydro One is built around a commitment to keep secrets from the people of Ontario. As citizens, we'll be in the dark.

I don't know what's more offensive about this privatization: that your government has no mandate whatsoever to do it; or that your government has refused to even contemplate sustainable revenue options that would allow the province not only to fund new infrastructure projects but to pay for the public services we need as well. As you know, Ontario has the lowest program spending per capita of any Canadian province. Public services in this province are not just lean: they are starving, and your government is starving them. Selling our assets won't do a thing to fix this fundamental problem.

(Please turn over)

News reports yesterday said that two major banks have been chosen to handle the butchering of Hydro One. This is a surprise to no one: your entire government has been the fawning slave of bankers, corporate lawyers, and well-connected construction companies since the 2008-09 recession, if not earlier. As these companies carve up our heritage, the people of Ontario will be left with nothing but the memory of democratic control.

It is not too late to turn back on this terrible decision. It is not too late to protect the public interest and save Hydro One. I strongly advise you to do everything within your power to make sure your government does so.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Warren Thomas", written in a cursive style.

Warren (Smokey) Thomas
President, Ontario Public Service Employees Union

Cc: OPSEU Executive Board
All MPPs
All presidents, Provincial Liberal Associations
All member organizations, Keep Hydro Public