

NDP Caucus News

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PCs Choose Corporate Interest Over Fairness for Ratepayers

NL NDP Leader Jim Dinn (St. John's Centre) is disappointed but not surprised in the PC government for undermining the intent of the NDP motion to cap executive salaries at Newfoundland Power and ensure any bonus pay is mandated to come from shareholders – not ratepayers.

The NDP brought forward the motion in the House of Assembly yesterday, which aimed to change the *Public Utilities Act* – which regulates the Newfoundland Power – that would ensure ratepayers are not burdened with paying increased fees that go towards salaries. This exact motion was put forward by the NDP government in Nova Scotia in 2012 and received unanimous support from all political parties. Dinn says to see the PC government weaken this motion with their own amendment is frustrating.

“I have to shake my head and question whether this government has any real interest in working together to make our systems better, fairer, and to rebuild trust with the people of this province,” said Dinn. “Our original motion set out a clear path: amend the *Public Utilities Act*, just as Nova Scotia had the political will to do, and send a message to ratepayers that we hear your frustration. We wanted this to be the beginning of meaningful change – change that is long overdue in our system.”

“During debate, my colleague MHA O’Leary and I spoke about the calls we received this winter from constituents facing the threat of having their electricity cut off,” said Dinn. “We heard from seniors on fixed incomes, and from families trying to stretch every dollar – figuring out how to cover a \$900 power bill while still putting nutritious food on the table. People are being squeezed from every direction. This is about fairness. It’s about making sure people know they’re not going cold while executives take home hundreds of thousands of dollars off their backs.”

“Instead of recognizing the value in our motion, the government chose to water it down to yet another study on rates we already understand,” said Dinn. “That shifts this motion from a call to action into something that is delayed and ultimately forgotten.”

“It raises serious questions about priorities. Rather than working together to make the system fairer – as we’ve seen in other provinces – the government appears more focused on protecting corporate interests and political donors than delivering relief for ratepayers.”

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For further information, contact Stephanie Curran, Media and Communications Officer, NDP Caucus at 330-0328 (o), or stephaniecurran@assembly.nl.ca