



KEEP TORONTO HYDRO PUBLIC

Public assets are under relentless attack around the world. In Ontario, both the provincial hydro utility Hydro One and municipal utilities such as Toronto Hydro have been under threat of privatization for years.

Privatization is one of the maximum goals of neoliberalism. It locks in a long term shift in power and wealth from the people to the 1%. The Wynne government, with no mandate from the people, plans to sell 60% of Hydro One. At Toronto City Hall, there is an endless stream of leaks and trial balloons about privatizing Toronto Hydro. Mayor John Tory, like Premier Wynne, has no mandate from the people for hydro privatization.

Although public opposition is consistently high, a convergence of interests is making ground - driving hydro privatization:

- Financial interests are sitting on huge pools of private capital and are aggressively seeking opportunities to invest that capital and make super profits on it.
- Bay Street views privatization as both a short term and a long term opportunity to make profits on transaction fees and other commissions – as well as on ownership of shares
- Neoliberal ideologues view public ownership as the ultimate check against the profitmaking.
- Private power corporations are determined to achieve total ownership and control of Ontario's electricity system
- Consulting firms like KPMG earn huge sums as private power lobbyists and as specialists in implementing privatization
- Many politicians, including some who know better, would rather grab the lump sum proceeds from privatization than challenge corporate power – by taxing them fairly.

The good news is that it is not too late to stop hydro privatization. Toronto Hydro is 100% public and Hydro One is still 85% publicly owned.

At the moment, private power advocates are keeping their heads down at Toronto City Hall. The task there for defenders of public power is to continue the ongoing, low profile work of consolidating opposition to privatization of Toronto Hydro.

This month, the campaign against privatization of Hydro One will be relaunched. It will target individual Liberal MPPs – by name - across Toronto and across Ontario. Those MPPs will be clearly
... over

identified as responsible for the impact of hydro privatization and will be challenged to break ranks with Wynne and to speak out for the people who elected them.

The relaunched campaign to stop the privatization of Hydro One will provide an immediate, strategic opportunity for defenders of public ownership of Toronto Hydro. Across Toronto, the provincial campaign will:

- Deliver a powerful anti-privatization message. This will strengthen opposition to municipal privatization.
- Point the finger of responsibility at Liberal MPPs - by name. The high profile focus on Liberal MPPs will cause City Councillors to reflect on the political cost of supporting hydro privatization.
- Shake the willingness of Liberal MPPs and Liberal Party insiders to proceed with the selloff of Hydro One. Stopping further privatization of Hydro One would be the best defense of public ownership of Toronto Hydro.
- Greatly increase the mobilization of defenders of public power. Every effort to increase participation in the provincial campaign (door-to-door canvassing for example) will build much-needed boots-on-the-ground capacity for the municipal anti-privatization campaign.

The Labour Council will:

1. Reaffirm its commitment to defeat privatization of public assets in Toronto, including the Parking Authority and the Toronto Community Housing Authority, as well as Toronto Hydro.
2. Support efforts at Toronto City Hall to strengthen defense of public assets, including educating union members and the public to prepare them for the propaganda campaign
3. Prepare thoroughly for the next corporate drive to privatize Toronto Hydro
4. Provide support and member mobilization for provincial campaign actions within Toronto.

FEBRUARY 2016

cope 343