

CHANGING WORKPLACE REVIEW

The STATUS QUO is NOT an OPTION

Canadian Families need
DECENT JOBS & WORKERS RIGHTS
to feed & grow a healthy Ontario

Change rules to make it easier for workers to unionize

Strengthen successor rights so workers can maintain their conditions when contracts are "flipped"

Eliminate or refine exemptions allowed for ESA coverage

Allow "sectoral bargaining" to set standards in parts of the service sector

Enforce the law so workers get their money and keep their jobs



Protect workers during the complaint process

Strengthen rule to ensure workers get fair first contract

Same pay for part time & temp agency workers as permanent workers

Make client companies responsible for wage theft by agencies & sub-contractors

Tackle the issues of temp agencies & franchises

Personal Leave
+ Vacation Time
+ Sick Days

WORKERS + COMMUNITY
Fight for Our Children's Future

CHANGING WORKPLACES – CHANGING THE RULES?

At the end of July, the Government of Ontario released the long-awaited report from the Changing Workplace Review. At 320 pages, it is an impressive examination of the new realities of work in the province that was once Canada's industrial heartland. From a time when a quarter of all jobs were in the well-paid industrial sector, today that number is down to just over 10%, while the service sector has grown dramatically. More than 13% of the workforce is now involved in temp work, while unionization has slowly eroded to provide only 14% of private sector employees a voice at work. It is a sobering reminder of the kind of jobs the next generation will be finding when they graduate.

The Highlights

The review looks at the role of Labour Law and the Employment Standards Act in the modern workplace. It is clear from the many submissions from workers, unions and community groups that both of these need to be updated, and a new balance provided against the growing power of corporations in the economy. The authors outlined a series of options for making change, but also included an option of "maintain the status quo". That reflects the approach of the business lobby, which sees no reason to empower workers or provide serious penalties against companies that break the law.

But among the options offered were ones that would provide real change to improve conditions for workers in this province. These include

- o Change the rules to make it easier for workers to unionize
- o Strengthen the rules to ensure workers can get a fair first contract
- o Strengthen successor rights so workers can maintain their conditions when contracts are "flipped"
- o Allow "sectoral bargaining" to set standards in parts of the service sector
- o Tackle the issues of temp agencies and franchises

Major issues in the Employment Standards Act include:

- o Eliminate or refine the many exemptions allowed for ESA coverage
- o Part-time and temp agency jobs pay the same as permanent work
- o Make client companies responsible for wage theft by agencies or sub-contractors
- o Personal leave, vacation time and sick days
- o Enforce the law so workers get their money and keep their jobs
- o Protect Workers during the complaint process

What's Next?

The next stage in the Review is for feedback from unions, employers, workers and community groups on the specific options they want to see turned into reality. Business is now starting to organize across the province to pressure the Liberals to do as little as possible - so labour needs to ramp up the fight for positive change.

This really is a fight for the next generation. The status quo will not be an acceptable option. Do we want our sons and daughters to be living a precarious existence with low wages and few benefits? Or should work be respected, with clear rules to support decent jobs and workers' rights? The Changing Workplace Review may be about legislation, but what's at stake is fundamentally about the kind of Canada our families will live in for decades to come.