



Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter

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Dorset Park Community Hub, 1911 Kennedy Rd #105 Toronto, ON M1P 2L9

By e-mail: CWR.SpecialAdvisors@ontario.ca

October 14, 2016

By fax: 416-326-7650

By mail: Mr. Mitchell and Honourable Murray

Special Advisors

Changing Workplaces Review

ELCPB 400 University Ave., 12th Floor

Toronto, Ontario M7A 1T7

Dear Mr. Mitchell and Hon. Murray:

Re: Submission to the Changing Workplaces Review on the Interim Report

The Chinese Canadian National Council - Toronto Chapter has been serving and supporting the Chinese-Canadian community for over 35 years promoting equity, social justice & diversity through community & civic engagement, and public education initiatives.

Over the years we have developed strong partnerships with many other communities and organizations that work to address issues faced by racialized & vulnerable populations within Ontario communities, such as newcomers, women, youth, seniors and migrant workers. We are the Co-Chair of the Chinese Interagency Network's Labour Committee, which works to address labour related concerns impacting the community. We know that Migrant workers work in some of the most dangerous and difficult jobs in Ontario, and have some of the lowest wages and protections.

It's no accident that many of the industries that are primarily made up of migrant workers are exempted from the Employment Standards Act. To the extent that workers with status have other options, they move to work with better legal protections. This leaves the most vulnerable workers in the the least regulated/most exploitative workplaces. As a result, migrant workers are denied basic protections under the law, such as Minimum Wage, hours of work and more.

The current conditions faced by migrant workers resembles the discrimination and exploitation faced by early Chinese migrant workers that built the railroads that made a united Canada a reality. It is imperative that we do not repeat that history. Migrant workers are part of our communities, where they live, work, shop and build relationships. They are not "foreigners", they are part of Ontario's workforce and labour market. As a result of their temporary immigration status, migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to abuse.

As the appointed Advisors to the Changing Workplaces review, you have the opportunity to champion & work to make these changes a reality. We are calling on you today to reject options that will introduce more precarity to Ontario's labour market and instead recommend:

1. That migrant workers get the same rights, and protections as other workers in Ontario;

2. That migrant workers receive anti-reprisals protections, and that proactive enforcement of the Employment Standards Act be expanded; and
3. That migrant workers are protected from recruitment fees through proactive licensing and regulation of recruiters.

The Migrant Workers Alliance for Change has developed recommendations to further migrant worker rights - ***Ensuring Migrant Worker Fairness*** - our organization endorses those recommendations. Further, our organization also supports the submissions by Workers' Action Centre and Parkdale Community Legal Services.

Yours truly,



Chase Lo

Executive Director

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