

October 7, 2016

Sent by Email: CWR.SpecialAdvisors@ontario.ca

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

We are writing on behalf of Downtown Legal Services, the legal clinic for the Faculty of Law at the University of Toronto. We provide free legal advice and representation to low income individuals in housing, family, criminal, immigration and employment law matters. Many of our clients are precariously employed, working part-time, for minimum wage without any supplementary benefits.

The Changing Workplaces Review provides an unprecedented opportunity to tackle the root causes of precarious work. As the appointed Advisors to the Changing Workplaces review, you were asked by the government to address why “far too many workers are experiencing greater precariousness” today in Ontario.

We are calling on you to reject options that will introduce more precarity to Ontario's labour market and instead recommend a bold and comprehensive vision that uproots the structural sources of precarious employment. As you well know, we cannot expect to fix systemic labour market problems with band-aid solutions.

We are heartened that you have correctly identified changing business practices as a source of precarious work. We note that many of these practices stem from the many exemptions and loopholes that make it possible for employers to evade their responsibilities under the law. Accordingly, we need to close the gaps in legislation that contribute to precarious work and that, left unchecked, will continue to exert downward pressure on the wages and working conditions of all of us.

In addition to raising minimum standards for all workers, we must also reduce the barriers to collective bargaining that exclude most people in precarious work.

The Workers' Action Centre and Parkdale Community Legal Services have provided a full review of the Advisors' Interim Report and made recommendations to improve

wages and working conditions. DLS supports and endorses their submission,
“Building Decent Jobs from the Ground Up.”

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lisa Cirillo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lisa" being more prominent than the last name "Cirillo".

Lisa Cirillo
Executive Director
Downtown Legal Services