



Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
Ontario Regional Council

VOICE OF THE POOR ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

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Dear Mr. Mitchell and Hon. Murray:

Re: Submission to the Changing Workplaces Review Interim Report

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is a non-profit registered charity that has been serving our neighbours in need in Ontario since 1846. Each year over 5000 of our volunteers visit more than 170,000 people offering assistance such as friendship, food and furniture vouchers. We witness daily how people who are precariously employed struggle to maintain a decent life for their families.

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. Our organization supports and endorses their submission, “Building Decent Jobs from the Ground Up.”

Yours truly,

Danny Bourne, Corry Wink

Co-Chairs; Voice of the Poor Advocacy Committee

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, Ontario Region