



Thunder Bay & District Injured Workers Support Group

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www.thunderbayinjuredworkers.com

October 14, 2016

Dear Mr. Mitchell and Hon. Murray:

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

Work and workplaces are changing. We submit that your task in reviewing these changes is a real challenge as our society is moving away from valuing workers and the work they do.

Work is one of the biggest, if not *the* biggest, parts of our adult lives. It can bring economic security; the ability to provide for our families. Work can give us a purpose in life - a way to contribute to the greater good. Productive, meaningful employment can lead to healthy individuals and healthy communities. It can help us connect with others building strong social networks.

Our group, The Thunder Bay & District Injured Workers Support Group, was founded in 1984 in response to the then pending legislation, Bill 101. The geographic area that the Thunder Bay & District Injured Workers' Support Group membership resides in is approximately one-quarter of a million square miles.

The Thunder Bay & District Injured Workers' Support Group's (TB&DIWSG) mission is to help create Dignity, Respect and Justice for Injured and Disabled Workers in the Workers' Compensation System by assisting and educating workers, injured workers, the general public, our elected representatives and WSIB staff.

The organization has four main goals:

1. Provide information and support to injured workers;
2. Provide analysis of legislation and make recommendations for improvements and reform;
3. Educate each other and the general public; and
4. Lobby government and the WCB/WSIB to establish Justice for Injured and Disabled Workers.



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The TB&DIWSG is a democratically governed group with a Board of Directors elected at the annual general meeting (AGM). Our members are injured workers, family members and other individuals who support injured workers and their issues.

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,

Steve Mantis

Treasurer