

# CHANGING WORKPLACE REVIEW

The STATUS QUO is NOT an OPTION

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

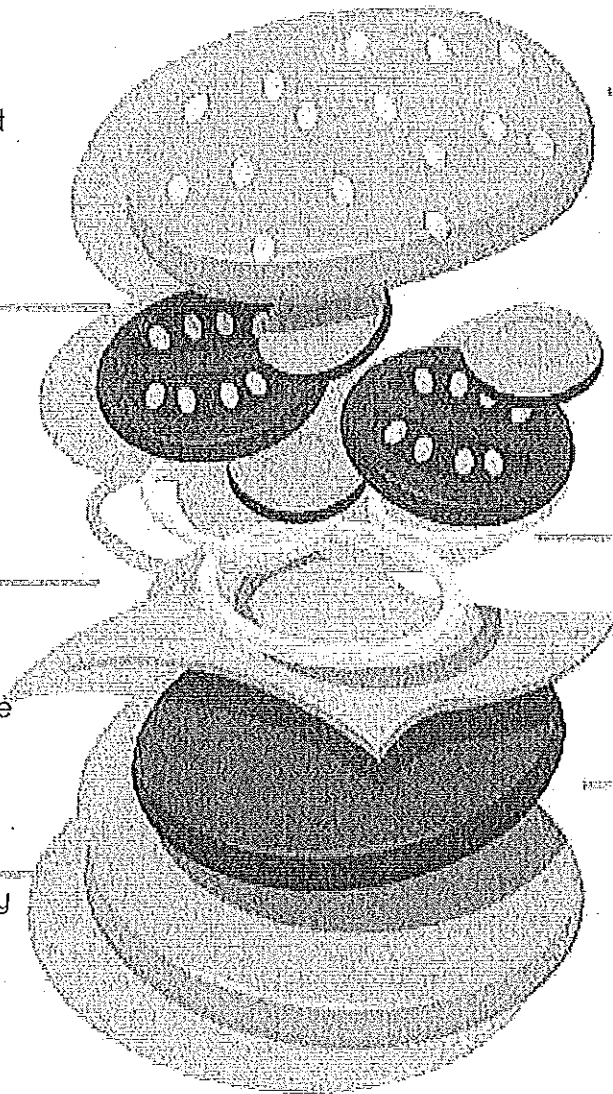
Change rules to make it easier for workers to unionize

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.



## FOR IMMEDIATE MEDIA RELEASE

July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016

### ***Protecting workers builds strong, healthy Ontario***

CHANGING ECONOMY necessitates modernization of Ontario LABOUR LAWS

TORONTO, ONT – For over twenty years, Ontario's Labour Law and Employment Standards Act has been frozen in time while economy has drastically changed. The Interim Report of the Changing Workplace Review, released on July 27<sup>th</sup>, clearly recognizes that reality, and invites the people of Ontario to debate a wide menu of options to remedy the rise of poverty wages and precarious work.

The Report combines a full reflection of what was heard across the province from workers, unions, employers and community groups. In most cases employers suggested no changes to existing legislation, while all other voices called for dramatic improvements in workers' rights.

"Insecurity has risen and realities for families across Toronto and York region have shifted far from when the current laws were written" said Andria Babbington, Vice-President of the Toronto & York Region Labour Council. "It is time to face the truth; that to strengthen the rights of Ontario workers is to build a stronger province, one that is built on principles of justice and prosperity for all."

The Labour Council welcomes the Report and is urging the Government of Ontario to prepare to bring in bold legislation that will provide more balance in the economy between the interests of workers and power of employers. The decline of unionization levels and stagnation of wages is a direct result of corporate restructuring and fierce business resistance to workers securing a collective voice in their workplace. At the same time the huge increase of temporary and part-time work is depriving the next generation of meaningful careers.

The Labour Council has been campaigning for a number of years to improve workers' rights to organize into unions, improve their working conditions, and win dignity and respect on the job. To download Labour Council's submission to the Changing Workplace Review [click here](#).

The Toronto and York Region Labour Council is a central labour body that combines the strength of over 150 local unions representing 205,000 women and men and who work in every sector of the economy. For information visit [www.labourcouncil.ca](http://www.labourcouncil.ca) and follow @torontolabour on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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