

Today's News - Thursday, June 1, 2017

From: Todays News (OPO) <todays.news@ontario.ca>
To: Todays News (OPO) <todays.news@ontario.ca>
Date: Thu, 01 Jun 2017 14:59:08 -0400

Today's News Thursday, June 1, 2017

Minister of Labour Kevin Flynn introduced legislation today to create more opportunity and security for workers through a plan for Fair Workplaces and Better Jobs. Over the past three years, Ontario's economy has outperformed all G7 countries in terms of real GDP growth. While exports and business investments are increasing and the unemployment rate is at a 16-year low, the nature of work has changed. Many workers are struggling to support their families on part-time, contract or minimum-wage work. Government has a responsibility to ensure Ontario workers are protected by updating the province's labour and employment laws.

The Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017 would:

- Raise Ontario's general minimum wage to \$14 per hour on January 1, 2018, and then to \$15 on January 1, 2019, followed by annual increases at the rate of inflation
- Mandate equal pay for part-time, temporary, casual and seasonal employees doing the same job as full-time employees; and equal pay for temporary help agency employees doing the same job as permanent employees at the agencies' client companies
- Expand personal emergency leave to include an across-the-board minimum of at least two paid days per year for all workers
- Bring Ontario's vacation time into line with the national average by ensuring at least three weeks' vacation after five years with the same employer
- Make employee scheduling fairer, including requiring employees to be paid for three hours of work if their shift is cancelled within 48 hours of its scheduled start time.

The government is also proposing measures to expand family leaves and make certain employees are not misclassified as independent contractors, ensuring they get the benefits they deserve. To enforce these changes, the province will hire up to 175 more employment standards officers and launch a program to educate both employees and small and medium-sized businesses about their rights and obligations under the Employment Standards Act.

[Share on Facebook](#)

[Share on Twitter](#)

Also today:

- Ontario passed legislation today that positions the province as a leader in fighting systemic racism and advancing racial equity for all. The Anti-Racism Act, 2017:
 - Establishes the Anti-Racism Directorate in legislation to ensure its sustainability
 - Requires the continuation and regular review of a multi-year anti-racism strategy
 - Mandates a review of the anti-racism strategy at least every five years, in consultation with the public and community partners
 - Enables the government to implement race data collection and an anti-racism impact assessment tool, to help identify or prevent inequitable racial impacts of policies and programs.

Fighting systemic racism and advancing racial equity is part of our plan to create jobs, grow our economy and help people in their everyday lives.

[Share on Facebook](#)

[Share on Twitter](#)

- Today, Ontario passed legislation to help children and youth across the province reach their

full potential by strengthening child, youth and family services. The Child, Youth and Family Services Act makes significant changes to how Ontario provides services to children and youth in need of protection, putting young people at the centre of decisions about their care. Key areas of change in the act include:

- o Raising the age of protection from 16 to 18 to increase protection services for more vulnerable youth in unsafe living conditions
- o Making services more inclusive and culturally appropriate for all children and youth to ensure every child receives the best possible support
- o Putting a greater focus on early intervention, to help prevent children and families from reaching crisis situations at home
- o Improving accountability and oversight of service providers, including children's aid societies and licensed residential service providers.

Supporting children and youth and helping them reach their full potential is part of our plan to create jobs, grow our economy and help people in their everyday lives.

[Share on Facebook](#)

[Share on Twitter](#)

Ontario Savings Bonds (OSBs) are now on sale until June 21, 2017 — a safe, secure, flexible investment fully backed by the province. Funds raised through Ontario Savings Bonds support infrastructure projects such as new hospitals, schools, roads and bridges. OSBs can be purchased in amounts starting from \$100 up to \$1 million. The interest rates for the 2017 series are:

- o Five-year Step-Up Bond:
 - \$ 0.60 per cent this year
 - \$ 0.80 per cent in the second year
 - \$ 1.05 per cent in the third year
 - \$ 1.30 per cent in the fourth year
 - \$ 1.65 per cent in the fifth year
- o Fixed-Rate Bonds:
 - \$ 1.00 per cent for the three-year Fixed-Rate Bond
 - \$ 2.15 per cent for the 10-year Fixed-Rate Bond
- o Three-year Variable-Rate Bond: 0.65 per cent for the first year

Offering safe and flexible investments that build Ontario is part of our plan to create jobs, grow our economy and help people in their everyday lives.

[Share on Facebook](#)

[Share on Twitter](#)

Our government's plan to build a stronger, healthier Ontario includes historic new investments in health care, including free medications for everyone 24 and under through OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare, providing free tuition to over 210,000 students and on-the-job learning opportunities to help land a great job, helping 100,000 kids access quality, licensed child care, making everyday life more affordable by reducing electricity costs by 25 per cent on average through our proposed Fair Hydro Plan, and taking action to make housing more affordable for homebuyers and renters through our Fair Housing Plan.