

Question

- Thank you Mr. Speaker.
- My question is for the Minister of Labour.
- Minister, I have spent the last few months meeting with as many of my constituents as I possibly can in my riding of (riding).
- We have had many different conversations, but I know that I am not alone when I say that one topic that was continuously raised was our plan to address inequality in our workplaces.
- I heard this in my office, I heard this at (Insert summer festival or events in riding)
- I spoke with so many hard-working people who say they are just not able to get ahead.
- They are working so hard to put food on their table and take care of their children, but they are finding that the money runs out before the month the month is over.
- They are working a full 35 or 40 hours a week, but they are still struggling to make ends meet.
- They know our economy is doing well, but while businesses are expanding and creating wealth, they do not feel that.
- Minister, what are you and our government doing to help these workers and their families?

Answer:

- Thank you to my colleague from (riding)
- I think this is a very important question and something we have all heard from families in our ridings.
- It is true that our economy is doing very well
- We are leading the G7 in economic growth...
Manufacturing exports are up... **We currently have the lowest unemployment rate since 2001...**
- Yet, too many families are feeling like they are falling behind, even while they are working so hard.
- **That is not right and it needs to change.**
- That is why we are moving forward with the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act*.
- This legislation would bring transformative change to our provinces workplaces
- It would ensure workers across the province are paid a decent wage, and treated with dignity and respect.
- This is about doing what is right, what is fair and what is decent.
- Together with OHIP+, free tuition, our Fair Hydro and Fair Housing plans...
- We are building an Ontario where greater opportunity is available for everyone and greater security is achievable.

Supplementary Question:

- Thank-you Mr. Speaker and thank-you to the Minister.
- Aside from the conversations I have had in my own riding, I also spend part of my summer travelling with the committee to hear feedback from Ontarians on this plan
- As you know, the committee travelled to 10 cities across the province to hear from almost 200 Ontarians.
- I joined the committee in (insert cities of committee you joined) and we heard from workers, business owners, labour groups, poverty reduction advocates, doctors and public health professionals.
- It was clear to me, and I hope it was clear to the committee members from the other side of the House, that this legislation would have a profound impact on so many Ontarians.
- Not only for those who are currently working for less than \$15 dollars an hour, but those who are not given any notice of their work schedule, those who cannot risk taking a day off when they are sick, those who are being paid less than their full-time counterparts, those who are not afforded any time off to deal with difficult situations in their lives, and those who face intimidation when trying to organize.
- They are clearly counting on our support. What can you tell us about what you are doing to address those concerns?

Answer:

- Thank you to the Member from (riding)
- You raise an incredibly important point.
- This legislation is not just about minimum wage
- We are very proud to be putting forward a plan that will provide:
 - Wage equality, regardless of whether you are full-time, part-time, seasonal or temporary
 - Paid sick days, for all workers
 - Increased vacation time
 - Leave for survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence
 - A more fair and transparent unionization process
 - and more robust enforcement
- After a summer of dancing around the issue and dodging the hard questions... the opposition has finally announced that they will vote against this plan.
- That is incredibly disappointing.
- They will be voting against giving 30% of our workers a well-deserved raise
- They will be voting against ensuring working parents can take better care of themselves and their families
- They believe families in this province should continue to struggle to get by, even as they work so hard to get ahead.
- We could not **disagree** more.
- We are standing in the corner of families who are counting on our support and **we will not back down.**