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Subject: Ontario Creating Fair Workplaces and Better Jobs



News Release

Ontario Creating Fair Workplaces and Better Jobs

July 21, 2017

Province Wrapping Up Committee Hearings, Moving Forward with Legislation

Ontario is moving forward with a plan to create more opportunity and security for workers. This includes hiking the minimum wage, ensuring part-time workers are paid the same hourly wage as full-time workers, introducing paid sick days for every worker, enabling at least three weeks' vacation after five years with the same employer and stepping up enforcement of employment laws.

Today the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs is completing its public hearings on the proposed Bill 148, also known as the Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017. The committee travelled to 10 communities across the province over two weeks and heard approximately 190 presentations from members of the public, businesses, labour organizations and advocacy groups.

The committee will review all feedback received and the province will continue to consult with workers and businesses throughout the fall, as the bill moves through the legislative process, to ensure proposed changes give people the opportunity to succeed and get ahead.

Other highlights of the Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act include fairer scheduling rules, expanded family leaves, measures to address misclassification of employees, a modernized Labour Relations Act, and a program for educating employees and small- and medium-sized business owners about their rights and obligations under the Employment Standards Act.

Protecting workers and supporting business is part of our plan to create jobs, grow our economy and help people in their everyday lives.

QUICK FACTS

- The committee held hearings in Hamilton, Kingston, Kitchener-Waterloo, London, Niagara, North Bay, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Windsor-Essex, and Toronto.
- The Changing Workplaces Review, conducted by Special Advisors C. Michael Mitchell and John C. Murray over the past two years, estimated that more than 30 per cent of Ontario workers were in precarious work in 2014. This type of employment makes it hard to earn a decent income and interferes with opportunities to enjoy decent working conditions and/or puts workers at risk.
- In 2016, the median hourly wage was \$13 for part-time workers and \$24.73 for full-time workers. Over the past 30 years, part-time work has grown to represent nearly 20 per cent of total employment.
- Currently, half of the workers in Ontario earning less than \$15 per hour are between the ages of 25 and 64, and the majority are women.
- More than a quarter of Ontario workers would receive a pay hike through the proposed increase to the minimum wage.
- Studies show that a higher minimum wage results in less employee turnover, which increases business productivity. It also boosts the economy through the improved purchasing power of thousands of workers.
- Ontario's real GDP is up 14.6 per cent from the pre-recession peak and up 20.3 per cent since the recessionary low.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [The Premier's remarks on the plan for Fair Workplaces and Better Jobs](#)
- How the province's [Fair Hydro Act](#) is making energy more affordable for consumers and small businesses
- Read about [Ontario's Fair Housing Plan](#) and the steps being taken to help homebuyers
- See how a balanced [Budget 2017](#) is improving the lives of Ontarians through investments in health care and education, and free prescription medication for everyone 24 and under

QUOTES

"While some choose to put the bottom line ahead of people working hard to provide for their family, our government believes in protecting all citizens, creating better opportunities for all workers, and giving families hope and confidence about the future. Our goal must be to build a society where fairness, opportunity and security are available to everyone."

— *Kevin Flynn, Minister of Labour*

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