



DURHAM MPPs CALL ON MCGUINITY LIBERALS TO KILL BILL 119 – NOT SMALL BUSINESSES

It's no secret that much of the world's economy is in shambles. Businesses are closing their doors and job losses follow closely behind.

Ontario has been hit harder than most by this economic storm, thanks to the high taxes and increasing government spending that has weakened our economy. Our province has lost more than 200,000 well-paying manufacturing jobs.

This isn't the prosperous Ontario we used to know.

In a time like this, it is natural to assume that our government would be doing all it can to keep businesses and jobs in Ontario.

That's why it was surprising when the McGuinty Liberals introduced a policy that will hurt small construction businesses across the province.

The legislation would force small businesses to pay, on average, \$11,000 in extra fees for government workplace insurance. It would force officer workers and company directors to pay for the same coverage as ironworkers and heavy equipment operators. Even people who already have workplace insurance, often at cheaper rates with better coverage, would be forced to pay these extra premiums. Less coverage for more money isn't good for anyone: not the workers, not the businesses and not the province.

Many small businesses can't afford paying an extra \$11,000 right now. Their profits are down as it is in this troubled economy.

There are few options for businesses that don't have enough money: they can either close up shop or flee to the underground economy. Both are bad news for the provincial government. We'll lose jobs and revenue, both of which are difficult to come by at the moment.

On Wednesday last week, PC Leader John Tory was joined by PC Labour Critic Bob Bailey and Judith Andrew, Vice-President of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), to call on the McGuinty Liberals to kill this bill, instead of killing small businesses.

Ms. Andrew, whose organization represents over 40,000 small businesses in Ontario that make up 50 per cent of the province's jobs, has called the legislation "misguided" and a "betrayal of small and medium-size business". The McGuinty government didn't even bother consulting the CFIB before introducing this bill.

This terrible piece of legislation proves that the McGuinty Liberals are out-of-touch with Ontario's small businesses. We should be nurturing a business environment that keeps businesses here and attracts new ones. Instead, the Liberals are chasing what we have away.

Too many business owners in Ontario, where taxes are increasing and profits are tanking, are tempted to move to places like B.C., where they're lowering the cost of doing business.

Ontario is facing a \$500 million deficit and has sunk to "have-not" status. The way back out of this mess includes helping businesses succeed and create jobs, not hitting struggling employers with added cost and more red tape. The McGuinty Liberals should withdraw this job-killing bill immediately.

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