



TO: ONTARIO PREMIER KATHLEEN WYNNE

FROM:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Postal Code _____

Email Address _____

Dear Premier Wynne:

I am heartened that your government is responding to the widespread desire of Ontarians to have access to decent work and wages. In particular, I support a \$15 minimum wage, fairer scheduling, paid emergency days and more. I also believe all workers should have the right to join unions without threat of reprisal.

You are right to stand strong on a \$15 minimum wage in 2019 despite the fear mongering of Big Business who oppose decent work and wages.

I am concerned, however, that you bowed down to Big Business during committee review of Bill 148 and introduced amendments to scheduling that will make it extremely difficult for workers who need fair scheduling to actually get access to it.

Similarly, rather than strengthening the equal pay provisions for part time, temporary, casual workers and temporary agency workers so they have a chance of enforcing these new rights, the government has further eroded the Bill's equal pay language. This especially hurts women and workers of color, who are over-represented in part-time, temporary employment.

For these reasons, I am asking you to remove employer loopholes in scheduling and provide workers with real access to strong equal pay protections. As you know, there is widespread support among voters for \$15 minimum wage, fair scheduling and equal pay. But voters will be watching to see that these are real rights and not just window dressing.

I also hope you will further regulate temporary agencies to end practices where workers languish in temporary, precarious employment for months and even years on end. I believe workers should be directly hired after three months of service to a client company. In this regard, the Employment Standards Act must ensure that temporary agency workers have “just cause” protection to ensure they are not let go before being made permanent. Of course, it goes without saying that client companies must be held responsible when temporary agency workers are injured and made sick on the job.

I also hope you will also consider increasing the number of paid emergency leave days to seven. Two days per year is simply not enough protection for workers, especially if they care for children or elderly parents.

Bill 148 takes important steps to improve access to unionization for all Ontario workers and strengthen protections for unionized workers. However, steps are still need to provide greater access to employee information and remove undue restrictions on workers’ right to unionize when lists are provided. Workers also need quicker access to first contract arbitration.

I urge your government to move quickly to strengthen Bill 148, the Fair Workplaces Better Jobs Act and adopt it as law. I also hope that your government will continue the important process of strengthening labour and employment law as supported by health providers, community groups, trade unions, faith leaders, students’ unions, and anti-poverty organizations all across Ontario.

Sincerely,
