



Horwath Names New NDP Shadow Cabinet

NDP Leader Andrea Horwath unveiled the NDP's Shadow Cabinet in early April as follows:

Andrea Horwath – Leader; Children & Youth Services; Intergovernmental Affairs.

Gilles Bisson – Whip; Aboriginal Affairs; Northern Development & Mines; Research & Innovation.

Cheri DiNovo – Small Business; Employment Standards; Women's Issues; Housing; Citizenship & Immigration.

France G linas – Health & Long Term Care; Health Promotion; Autism; Francophone Affairs.

Howard Hampton – Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs; Natural Resources; Economic Development & Trade.

Peter Kormos – House Leader; Labour; Justice; Community Safety & Correctional Services; OLG; Consumer Protection.

Rosario Marchese – Education; Training; Colleges & Universities; GTA Issues.

Paul Miller – Pensions; WSIB; Tourism; Recreation and Sport; Government Services; Seniors.

Michael Prue – Finance; Revenue; Community & Social Services; Disabilities; Municipal Affairs.

Peter Tabuns – Environment; Energy; Culture; Public Infrastructure Renewal; Transportation.

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Workplace Anti-Harassment Law

On April 19 the government brought in proposed amendments to Ontario's *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

Bill 168 designates harassment and violence as hazards and requires employers to identify them as such and carry out effective prevention and response. The new law will also include violence as a reason for refusing unsafe work. The Bill requires employers to prepare a workplace harassment policy and develop and maintain a program to implement that policy.

It provides for the addition of a definition of "workplace violence" to the *Act* itself, and requires employers to understand their responsibilities, and workers their rights, in preventing workplace violence.

The Bill also contains a provision for workers so that they may remove themselves from harmful situations if they have reason to believe that they

are at risk of imminent danger due to violence in the workplace.

It further requires employers to take reasonable precautions to protect employees from domestic violence in the workplace.

Inquiries into the murders of Lori Dupont and Theresa Vince - both of whom were killed while at work - made recommendations to combat workplace harassment and violence. Theresa Vince was shot on June 2, 1996 by her supervisor after suffering through weeks of sexual harassment. Lori Dupont was stabbed on November 12, 2005 by her estranged boyfriend, who worked in the same hospital and had been harassing and stalking her for months. Advocates have been fighting for years to have the recommendations from their inquests enacted into law. The families of both women were present at Queen's Park for the introduction of the legislation.

McGuinty Budget Fails Women

In Question Period on March 31, NDP MPPs Cheri DiNovo and France Gélinas joined NDP leader, Andrea Horwath, in hammering the McGuinty Liberals for failing to adequately address women's issues in their provincial budget.

"This budget was an opportunity to make issues that affect women - like jobs, pay equity and child care - a priority. Instead, the McGuinty government gave women an 8 per cent tax hike on basic essentials," said Horwath.

Currently in Ontario, women earn on average 29 per cent less than men, yet the government didn't address the pay equity gap.

DiNovo challenged McGuinty to finally lift hundreds of thousands of Ontario women above the poverty line.

"In Dalton McGuinty's Ontario, two-thirds of minimum wage earners are women. Racialized women earn 36 per cent less than men; aboriginal women earn 54 per cent less than

men; and 42 per cent of elderly women live in poverty. Will the government put in writing that it will immediately raise the minimum wage to \$10.25 an hour as a first step in bringing hundreds of thousands of women over the poverty line?" DiNovo asked the Premier.

Gélinas spoke to the absence of any new funding towards the home care system. She highlighted the 3,000 Red Cross home care workers, represented by the Service Employees International Union, who are on strike because of substandard working conditions.

"This strike is a direct result of the McGuinty government's failure to properly fund home care and provide workers with a living wage," said Gélinas.

The vast majority of home care workers are women who are trying to feed their families and survive off wages that are inadequate.

"The McGuinty Liberals should be ashamed of themselves for running Ontario's home care system on the backs of underpaid and undervalued women," added Gélinas.

Horwath summed up the government's failing:

"With joblessness rising, benefits being cut and pensions disappearing, Dalton McGuinty is going to make life a lot harder for Ontario women," said Horwath.



Minimum Wage Flip Flop

After being grilled in the Legislature by NDP Leader, Andrea Horwath, Dalton McGuinty agreed to back down from his suggestion at a business luncheon that he may not increase the minimum wage to \$10.25 an hour.

"I'm pleased Dalton McGuinty saw the error of his ways and acquiesced to pressure from Ontarians to keep the minimum wage raise on schedule. His idle musings were totally irresponsible at a time when people are scared about their jobs and savings," said Horwath.

"The spring budget showed the McGuinty Liberals' real priorities.

Instead of a plan that would help sustain and create good-paying jobs, Dalton McGuinty is tacking 8 per cent more tax on the price of basic necessities.

Instead of a jobs plan, Dalton McGuinty decided to hand out \$2 billion in corporate tax giveaways to corporations that don't need it. And now Dalton McGuinty mused about whether the lowest paid workers in this province deserve an increase in their minimum wage."

"Dalton McGuinty is completely out of touch with the needs of Ontarians today and they're going to pay the price because of it," said Horwath.