



Status of Bills

In the February 15th – March 9th sitting five Government Bills passed Third Reading and received Royal Assent:

Bill 132, **Public Safety Related to Dogs Act** (pit bulls)

Bill 135, **Greenbelt Act**, (greenbelt plan)

Bill 163, **City of Ottawa Amendment Act**, (French language services)

Bill 167, **Education Amendment Act**, (terms of teacher collective agreements)

Bill 171, **Spousal Relationship Amendment Act** (definition of spouse)

Two Private Member's Bills passed Second Reading and went to Committee:

Bill 153, **Jay Lawrence and Bart Mackey Memorial Act** (highway traffic)

Bill 168, **Farm Implements Amendment Act** (purchase of farm implements)

One Government Bill was introduced:

Bill 176, **Election Statute Amendment Act** (campaign donations disclosure, fixed election date)

Ten Private Member's Bills were introduced:

Bill 172, **Education Amendment** (PC)

Bill 173, **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment** (NDP)

Bill 174, **Consumer Reporting Amendment** (LIB)

Bill 175, **Highway Traffic Amendment** (PC)

Bill 177, **Election Finances Amendment** (NDP)

Bill 178, **Greenbelt Amendment** (NDP)

Bill 179, **Safe Needles Save Lives** (NDP)

Bill 180, **Election Finances Amendment** (PC)

Bill 181, **Protection Against Illicit Drug Grow Houses** (PC)

Bill 182, **Gender-Based Price Discrimination Prohibition** (LIB)

FOCUS ON QUEEN'S PARK

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Commit to Not-for-Profit Childcare

On February 17th, NDP MPP Andrea Horwath grilled the McGuinty Government on its commitment to not-for-profit childcare. "Studies show that children need a not-for-profit system that puts them before the bottom line," said Horwath. "That should be the pillar of any new child development system. The federal Minister has said that only one province is pushing for a not-for-profit model. We know it's not Ontario."

"The Liberals are trying to dodge responsibility by downloading this crucial decision to municipalities. They want cities and towns to take the heat for the fact that they don't have a plan. They're out of touch with what really matters to everyday families: putting their children first."

Minister of Children and Youth Services Marie Bountrogianni responded in the House by saying "we never said we would only fund not-for-profit."

NDP Calls for Ergonomic Regulations

NDP Labour Critic Peter Kormos has asked the government to make ergonomic regulations an essential part of a government response to the crisis of repetitive strain injuries.

"Workers in Ontario have witnessed consultations before," said Kormos, "and injured workers have endured even more of them. But they know that at the end of the day it is action and not talk that's going to deal with repetitive strain injury."

"Both B.C. and Saskatchewan have acted. The template is there. These are ergonomic regulations that protect workers from these incredible injuries, these disastrous injuries. These are regulations that help stem this epidemic of repetitive strain injury in the workplace."

WSIB data indicates that over half of workplace injuries are from various forms of repetitive strain injuries.

Keep Promises on Women's Safety

NDP Women's Issues Critic Marilyn Churley called on the McGuinty Government to use International Women's Day as an opportunity to fix its broken promises that are putting the lives of Ontario women at risk.

"On the campaign trail McGuinty committed to ending domestic violence. But his record of broken promises and inadequate policies say the opposite," said Churley.

"For years, women's shelters have been forced to turn away struggling women because they are filled beyond capacity. But instead of providing sustained, increased funding to shelters to increase beds and programs, the Liberals inexplicably gave shelters money to hire fundraisers. That makes no sense," said Churley. "Shelters already fundraise, and making them even more dependent upon private donations makes them more vulnerable."

Churley also cited the lack of enforcement of bail orders. "Last month saw a succession of women attacked by abusers who contravened bail orders. But the government is not following up on Coroner's recommendations to use a risk assessment tool in all bail hearings."

"Lack of funding for second stage housing and affordable housing is also an issue," said Churley. "Women in shelters often have to choose between returning to an abusive home, or homelessness for themselves and their children, because there is a severe shortage of safe housing. Last November, McGuinty broke his election promises to restore second stage housing's core funding and to build 20,000 units of affordable housing."



"Another prime reason women return to an abusive relationship is because of the prospect of their families facing poverty. Every penny counts at this stage to break the cycle of violence. But the Liberals have not fulfilled their promise to end the claw back of the Federal child benefits to families on social assistance that discriminates against those women and children who most need them."

Safe Sharps Save Lives

NDP Health and Long-Term Care Critic Shelley Martel introduced a Private Member's Bill aimed at preventing injuries and infections caused by accidental sticks with hypodermic needles and other sharps.

"Every year in Ontario, more than 22,000 health care workers are accidentally stuck with needles," Martel said. "The majority of these accidents can be prevented through the use of safety-engineered technologies such as retractable needles."

Martel noted other provinces like Saskatchewan and Manitoba have regulations and/or legislation on this issue on the way. "We need to keep up with other provinces' safety standards."

"My bill will not only protect workers and patients," stated Martel. "It will also protect those 'downstream' from the initial use of the needle."

Downstream injuries affect hospital services workers such as laundry operators who may come into accidental contact with sharps, and children at local playgrounds who may pick up inappropriately discarded needles.

KORMOS' KORNER



NDP Labour Critic
Peter Kormos

"Card-based certification is hardly a radical proposal. It was the law in Ontario for decades under NDP, Liberal, and Conservative governments. The McGuinty Government is prepared to give it to construction trades workers but exclude retail and other sector workers, showing absolute contempt for those working women and men. And in the retail sector they're mostly women, mostly new Canadians, and in places like Wal-Mart, at some of the lowest possible wages.

We know that Wal-Mart is the most anti-union boss in North America. It will go to any length to destroy unions in its workplaces and deny its workers the right to freely, collectively bargain as members of a trade union. We know that a strong, clear majority of working women and men at Wal-Mart in Windsor have signed union cards joining the UFCW-Canada. We also know that Wal-Mart will go to any length to attack, undermine and destroy their union bid. When a clear, strong majority has signed union cards, like these women and men at Wal-Mart, why will the Liberal government not let them take advantage of card certification to organize into a labour union?"

- Peter Kormos

