



Provincial Election 2007



Manufacturing Job Loss

Ontario is the manufacturing heartland of Canada – or it was. Ontario employs 1.06 million manufacturing workers, about 17% of the province's total employment. Ontario has the second highest number of manufacturing employees in any jurisdiction in North America (only California, with a much higher population, has a higher number of manufacturing employees).

But one in ten manufacturing jobs in Ontario have disappeared in the last four years – 150,000 jobs lost since Dalton McGuinty became premier. The McGuinty Liberals have done nothing to alleviate this crisis. In fact, McGuinty doesn't even acknowledge the job loss crisis. He says "manufacturing is in transition. People who lose their jobs can just go and find a new one in another sector".

Canada's heartland has a Premier with no heart. He will not meet with workers when the plant gate shuts on them forever.

When working families lose their jobs, everyone loses. Your house isn't worth the mortgage you're paying, your kids won't be going to college or university and the local hospitals and schools start losing nurses, teachers and every other public service you need.

And even those laid-off workers who are lucky enough to find other employment usually do so at much lower rates of pay. Statistics Canada reports that workers who have been displaced by closures and mass layoffs and do find other work suffer an average decline of 25% in annual earnings. This works out to about \$10,000 per manufacturing worker.

And this decline in direct compensation loss doesn't include the loss of benefit plans such as supplemental health and dental, nor does it include the loss of pension plans. Dependent upon what benefit plans their new employer provides – if any – the decline could be even more severe and for many families this is more damaging than the actual wage loss.

In 2006 NDP Leader Howard Hampton introduced Bill 126, An Act to Provide For a Job Protection Commissioner, patterned after the highly successful experience in British Columbia with a Job Protection Commissioner. The Bill would create the Office of Job Protection Commissioner to undertake a variety of measures to prevent workplace closures and resulting job loss. These would include conferring with

employer and employee groups in situations where significant layoffs may be imminent – promoting the development of regional economic plans, making policy recommendations to various levels of government and providing mediation services between labour, the employer, banks, creditors, third party investors, etc., to save jobs and keep facilities operating. Unfortunately for the workers of Ontario, the McGuinty Liberals let the Bill die on prorogation of the Legislature in June 2007.

Ask your Local Candidates:

- Do you support NDP Leader Howard Hampton’s Job Protection Act, which includes the creation of an Office of Job Protection Commissioner?
- Do you support toughening Ontario employment laws to make it harder for companies to ship jobs overseas?
- Do you support a Wage Earner Protection Fund that will ensure that when a company goes bankrupt workers will get the vacation pay and severance they are owed?