

Coalition for Democratic Labour Relations

May 9, 2005

Hon. Dalton McGuinty
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

OPEN LETTER

Dear Premier:

On behalf of the Coalition for Democratic Labour Relations, we are writing to urgently request a meeting with you to discuss your government's proposed changes to the *Labour Relations Act*, and to request your support for our amendments. Without major amendments, Bill 144 threatens democracy in the workplace and creates uncertainty in the business community.

As you know, the Coalition has brought forward legislative amendments - amendments that will provide much needed clarity and certainty, particularly concerning the powers of the Ontario Labour Relations Board. These amendments are needed in order to strengthen the legislation and protect democracy in the workplace. The government's publicly stated intentions that remedial certification may be used only as a last resort must be reflected in the legislation. The Labour Relations Board will not interpret the Minister's comments when deciding upon an application for certification, but can only interpret the legislation itself. That is why it is so important for these changes to be made.

Legislative amendments are also required in order to protect the sanctity of the secret ballot vote. We believe that employees, in all sectors, are the only ones who should decide whether their workplace should be unionized, that they should be able to express their wishes through a secret ballot vote that allows them to make their choice in private, and away from any arm-twisting by unions, their peers, or their bosses.

We have also proposed amendments regarding interim powers, card-based certification in the construction sector, and the decertification poster. Again, these amendments strengthen the existing legislation by protecting the democratic rights of employees and employers, and by providing clarity and certainty for all involved - unions, employees, and employers all need to know what is expected of them.