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BILL 66 CONTINUES THROUGH LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Bill 66 Restoring Ontario's Competitiveness Act is a government omnibus Bill that amends 17 provincial statutes. Of particular interest to readers of this GR Report is Schedule 9 of the Bill which proposes changes to the Labour Relations Act.

If passed, certain public bodies (in the original Bill, a number of specific, but not all, municipalities, school boards, hospitals, colleges, universities; social services boards and local housing corporations were added at the Committee stage of the legislative process) that have been certified under the Labour Relations Act to be non-construction employers.

If Bill 66 passes into law, the trade unions that represent the organized workers of these public bodies who are employed or who may be employed in the construction industry will no longer represent those workers. Any collective agreement binding those public body

employers and the trade union will cease to exist in so far as it applies to the construction industry.

Municipal representatives support the proposed changes believing that it will result in more competitive bidding for their work thereby reducing the costs of construction projects. Construction union representatives contend that Bill 66 compromises the fundamental collective bargaining rights of their workers.

Following Second Reading the Bill was referred to the Standing Committee on General Government, public hearings were held, the Bill was subject to clause-by-clause review and has been reported back to the Legislature for Third Reading. Because the government enjoys a large majority in the Legislature, we believe it will pass Third Reading and receive Royal Assent in due course.

NEW INTERNSHIP PROGRAM ANNOUNCED FOR NORTHERN ONTARIO

The Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation will be enhancing its program offering with the launch of a new Northern Ontario Internship Program designed to create more opportunities for Indigenous people and address the skilled labour shortage in the north.

The new program will have two funding streams:

- The Northern Ontario Indigenous Internships Stream highlights the importance of the north's Indigenous population to the region's economy and workforce while providing employers with greater incentive to offer Indigenous internship opportunities; and

- The Northern Ontario Skilled Labour Internships Stream places an enhanced focus on skills shortages in areas such as the skilled trades and provides

Unlike entrance qualifications for other NOHFC internship programs, there will be no requirement that applicants be recent university or college graduates.

This is our government's attempt to support a wider variety of internships, including skilled trades, and address the unique needs of other in-demand jobs throughout the region. No additional funding for the NOHFC was announced in the news release from the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines.

CONSTRUCTION DAY AT QUEENS PARK



COCA's Construction Day at Queen's Park was held on Monday, March 18th. The focus of the meetings was to introduce new MPP's to COCA and to inform them about the importance of implementing the payment regime and the adjudication system. COCA's members met with MPP's, their staff and ministries.

At her keynote address at the evening Reception, Attorney General Caroline Mulroney committed the government to implement the payment regime and the adjudication system. The Attorney General remarked that since being appointed, her office has focused on implementing key aspects of the new and modernized Construction Act.

NDP MPP John Vanthof followed the Attorney General and commented that the NDP fully supported Prompt Payment and Adjudication.

Sponsors

- **Platinum Sponsor:** The Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario
- **Gold Sponsors:** The Grand Valley Construction Association, the Northeastern Ontario Construction Association

- **Silver Sponsors:** The Association of Millwrighting Contractors of Ontario, The Acoustical Association of Ontario, The Ontario Erectors Association, The Barrie Construction Association, The Ontario Masonry Contractors Association, The Reinforcing Steel Institute of Canada
- **Bronze Sponsors** – The Canadian Institute of Steel Construction and Dutch Masters Construction Services

Read more:

- [Daily Commercial News Article](#)
- [Construction Day Photographs](#)

Board and COO Meetings

The day following Construction Day, the Chief Operating Officers and Board of Directors meetings were held at the Royal Canadian Military Institute. Highlights of the meetings:

- COCA Members Alison Smith and Martha George shared their thoughts and highlighted initiatives their Associations have taken with respect to membership retention.
- Robin Senzilet, Assistant General Counsel, Office of the Employer Adviser provided an update on WSIB Funding Framework.
- Lynda S. Robson, PhD, Scientist, Institute for Work and Health presented the IHW's Evaluation of the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Ontario Working at Heights Training Standard.

Copies of Robin's and Lynda's have been circulated.

COCA's Annual Awards presentation will take place on Tuesday, June 11, 2019 and will be held at The Sheraton on the Falls (<https://www.sheratononthefalls.com/>). The Board of Directors and COO Meetings will take place on Wednesday, June 12th.

COCA has a room block of 25 Fallsview Rooms. Hotel Reservations can be reached at 1-800-519-9911. The negotiated rate of \$209 has been subsidized by an additional \$50.00. Please make sure when you make your reservations that you tell them you are with Council of Ontario Construction Associations.

MPP CONSULTS ON INSPECTIONS

On March 6th, following a meeting of the Provincial Labour-Management Health and Safety Committee, a number of COCA members and others met at the Centre for Health and Safety Innovation with Burlington MPP and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Labour, Jane McKenna, for a consultation on MoL inspections. Here's what participants told her:

- There are inconsistencies in inspections from region to region and from inspector to inspector
- Inspectors should put more focus on finding contractors who are working under the radar, in the underground economy, who ignore all the rules
- Inspectors should work evenings and weekends when much of this underground activity takes place
- Inspectors should use compliance assistance first, to help non-compliant contractors become aware of their obligations and foster compliance; enforcement should be the last resort
- Information relating to incidents is not forthcoming in a timely enough way to inform prevention activities meaningfully

PLAY A ROLE IN FALLS AWARENESS WEEK MAY 6TH – 10TH

Once again this year, the IHSA is leading a campaign aimed at preventing injury and death from falls on the job.

Work-related fall incidents are one of the primary safety issues for the construction industry. The IHSA is therefore encouraging construction associations and contractors to participate in this year's Falls Awareness Week campaign which will again take place this year from May 6th - 10th across the province, to bring attention to falls in construction.

The purpose of this campaign is to remind employers, and workers of the importance

of their roles in preventing workplace injuries and fatalities stemming from working at heights. Falls Awareness Week is a voluntary opportunity for employers and workers to start a discussion by having a safety talk around fall hazards on the worksite.

Your association can participate in this year's campaign by spreading the word. Ask your member contractors to instruct their supervisors to stop work on their jobsites and simply take 15-30 minutes, anytime during their workday from May 6 - 10, 2019 to hold a safety talk about fall prevention and working safely at heights.

IHSA has developed informative materials to help hold a successful discussion on the topic of working safely at heights. These free, downloadable resources-such as safety talks, magazines, and brochures - are available on the IHSA Fall Prevention and Working at Heights topic page:

https://www.ihsa.ca/topics_hazards/fall_prevention_wah.aspx

You can also email doyourpart@ihsa.ca to receive a package of printed materials.

FEDERAL & ONTARIO GOVERNMENTS ANNOUNCE NEW RENTAL HOUSING PROJECTS IN NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO

Ontario's Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Steve Clark and Canada's Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labor, Patty Hajdu were together in Thunder Bay recently to announce \$14.4 Million in funding for 15 projects that will create 127 new affordable rental housing units in northwestern Ontario.

The projects are part of an agreement struck between the governments of Canada and Ontario in 2011 totaling \$1.9B.

MINISTER ANNOUNCES INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

On March 12th Infrastructure Minister Monte McNaughton re-announced up to \$30 billion over 10 years in combined federal, provincial and municipal funding for infrastructure projects from the federal Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program agreement that was signed a year ago under the previous provincial government.

Ontario's share per project will be up to 33 per cent, or

\$10.2 billion spread across four streams: 1. Rural and Northern 2. Public Transit 3. Green 4. Community, Culture and Recreation.

The first intake for the Rural and Northern stream will be open for eight weeks starting March 18, and will focus on road, bridge, air or marine infrastructure in rural and northern communities with populations under 100,000 people.

EDUCATION MINISTER ANNOUNCES REFORMS

Among the reforms announced by Education Minister Lisa Thompson are the following:

- The average high school class size will increase from 22 to 28
- Class sizes for kindergarten and grades 1 to 4 will remain unchanged
- Learning the proper names of body parts will remain in grade 1
- Issues of gender identity and gender expression will be moved from grade 6 to grade 8
- Parents will be able to exempt their children from sex-education classes
- The Ministry of Education will develop on-line training aids to support parents in discussions with their children on sex education topics
- Mental health will be addressed in the primary years
- The issues of consent and body image will be dealt with in the curriculum starting in Grade 2
- All new teachers will be required to pass a mandatory math exam before they can be qualified to teach
- Changes are based on consultations with 72,000 Ontarians including parents, students, unions and trustees
- All middle-school teachers will be required to take additional math training
- Boards will be provided with funding for a math learning leader
- Poor performing boards will be provided with additional supports
- These reforms will be fully implemented in the fall of 2021