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## NEWS

### POVERTY ADVOCATES IN THE REGION ARE FUMING OVER FORD GOVERNMENT'S CHANGES



Nikki Wesley/Metroland

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was never an issue about minimum wage, we believe in a fair wage for all workers in Ontario," she said. "For us Bill 148 is still impacting us because the "Scheduling provision" has not been repealed."

She explained that the provision requires employers pay workers at least three hours pay for a re-scheduled or canceled shift, which makes it difficult for them to offer 24 hour emergency service. Workers rotate shifts being on call, and are paid an honorarium and overtime for the services.

"With this ruling we will have to force our staff to do scheduled work on weekends or cease to offer 24 hour emergency service," she said. Poverty advocates in the region are fuming over the changes.

The Halton Poverty Roundtable, an organization that championed advocacy for the living wage pilot project that was recently scrapped, send letters to the Province in opposition of the recent announcements. "It's criminal," said Steven Rodri-

gues, the Acton representative for the Halton Poverty Roundtable.

He says that Ford's changes are a hand out to big business, and ultimately hurt the poorest in the province.

"Food bank lines are getting longer," he said, noting that the living wage in Halton is around \$21 an hour.

He says that when people are paid a living wage, they are less of a burden on the health-care system and other social services, which he argues would save much more in taxpayer dollars.

Sarah Sabihuddin of the Halton Poverty Roundtable says that Ford's new act "slams the door on the people who earn the least in our community."

She says that there is no statistical evidence that wage increases cause widespread job loss and economic uncertainty.

"In fact, this July, six months after the last minimum wage increase and

when labour reforms took effect, Ontario's jobless rate dropped to 5.4 per cent, the lowest it has been since the year 2000."

She says that in Halton Region, over 44,500 people live below the poverty line.

"These changes were made to put money in workers' pockets and less in employers' pockets, and for good reason," she said.

By reducing paid sick days and making labour policy changes that she says will make it harder for workers to unionize, the government is hurting minimum wage workers that include women, people of colour, young families and newcomers.

#### STORY BEHIND THE STORY

Premier Doug Ford unveiled his PC government's new Making Ontario Open for Business Act, which will keep minimum wage at \$14, among other changes to provincial labour policy.

## legal matters | ESTATES & TRUSTS

### Q: WHAT DOES AN ESTATE FREEZE ACCOMPLISH?



**M. Jasmine Sweatman**  
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**A:** An estate freeze refers to an estate planning method used to minimize taxes. When an estate freeze occurs, the value (and tax liability) of the estate assets are "frozen" at a specific point in time, and all future growth is typically taxed in the hands of other family members, usually your spouse and next of kin.

One way of performing an estate freeze is to gift assets to your adult children prior to your death. You should first calculate how much money you need to survive during retirement, and then ascertain if you have assets in excess of that amount. Excess assets are then gifted and the future income and growth is then taxed in your children's hands.

Thinking of implementing an estate plan....call us to discuss!

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