

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## OFL: McGuinty government strips TTC employees of basic human rights

**(TORONTO)** – OFL President Sid Ryan denounced the McGuinty government for yesterday's passage of Bill 150, which stripped away the basic labour rights of TTC employees, including the right to strike. Ryan, who presented on this subject last week before the Standing Committee on General Government, warned that this legislation is unconstitutional and will threaten the economic security of thousands of workers and their families.

"This Bill is undemocratic and unnecessary. It is a shameful violation of human rights and international law," said Ryan. "Premier McGuinty has colluded with Toronto Mayor Rob Ford to fabricate the need for this legislation based on a fictional crisis that was part of an election strategy."

The passage of Bill 150, *The Toronto Transit Commission Labour Disputes Resolution Act*, declares the TTC an "essential service" and strips over 10,000 unionized transit workers of the ability to effectively negotiate their working conditions. Despite McGuinty's claim about the essential nature of the TTC, the law comes the day after his government released a provincial budget that offered no new funding to support public transit.

"The TTC doesn't meet any threshold for classification as an essential service. Interrupted transit service does not pose any serious risk to public health and safety, the environment or the economy," said Ryan. "Human rights are non-negotiable and they aren't to be treated lightly. When this government begins trading away our fundamental rights for its own political opportunism, it takes us down a very slippery slope indeed."

"The Premier parlayed the years of labour strife with Mike Harris Conservatives – the worst era in labour relations – into a win for his government. Bill 150 will undo all of this progress," said Ryan. "We are going to make certain every worker in this province is reminded of the Liberal betrayal of worker rights. Make no mistake, this Bill will be challenged in the courts and at the ballot box."

The Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) represents 54 unions and one million workers in Ontario.

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