

November 22, 2007

Minister of Labour, Brad Duguid  
1450 Midland Avenue East  
Suite 204  
Scarborough, Ontario  
M1P 4Z8

To: The Honourable Brad Duguid, Minister of Labour

As a result of an application for union certification submitted by three carpenters employed by the City of Hamilton, the city was officially certified as a "closed shop" union environment. Now, the city is not permitted to use non-union workers in any of its major capital projects – only unionized construction companies that are signatory to the Carpenter's Union can be on the bidder's list.

City staff are estimating it will cost the City of Hamilton hundreds of millions of dollars over the next decade. Additionally, it means that most the city's small businesses and members of the Chamber will be locked out of the cities' bidding process for contracts.

At a time when Hamilton is desperately in need of infrastructure rebuilding, the implications of this situation are unacceptable. The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce feels the Province of Ontario should overturn this certification ruling for the benefit of all Hamiltonians.

Please see attached a policy recommendation requesting the review and amendment of the labour laws to declare municipalities as "Non Construction Employers," and the request for an enactment of changes to the labour law to de-list municipalities already tied into these agreements.

Your assistance in this urgent matter is greatly appreciated. Please respond directly to the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, 555 Bay Street North, Hamilton, ON, L8L 1H1.

Sincerely,

Tyler MacLeod

CC:  
Premier Dalton McGuinty  
Legislative Building  
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Toronto ON M7A 1A1

CC: (by email)  
Hamilton MPPs  
Hamilton City Council Members  
Mayor Fred Eisenberger