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Questions for the Candidates Provincial Election 2014

1) The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) is proposing a new policy on Pre-Existing Conditions. If allowed to go through, the policy will ensure that fewer injured workers will be entitled to compensation, and those who are entitled will get far less. It will also mean that countless non-unionized, injured workers will lose their job security and the WSIB's assistance in negotiating accommodated work with their employer. Many disabled workers, especially those in precarious employment, will lose their jobs and be forced onto social assistance as a result of the WSIB's proposed policies.

Will you commit to scrapping the WSIB's proposed benefit policies and put the WSIB on track to providing fair compensation and proper employment protections to people who get injured or sick because of their jobs?

2) The government offered I. David Marshall, President and CEO of the WSIB, a \$400,000 bonus (on top of his \$400,000/year salary) if he "achieves certain financial goals" within 5 years. As the WSIB's annual reports show, these financial goals – and the CEO's \$400,000 bonus - are pursued through cuts to injured workers' benefits. Since I. David Marshall has been CEO, advocates have alleged that there has been an onslaught of illegal decisions that has forced workers to appeal their claims. The Tribunal charged with hearing appeals has made public statements about the "wave of appeals" and the backlog the appeal system is now faced with. The delay in getting to an appeal is forcing many injured workers into poverty.

Will you commit to firing the current "bonus driven" WSIB leadership in favour of one that respects the law and the rights of injured workers?

3) Workers are told (sometimes after retraining) that they must find a job they can do with their disability. The WSIB then pretends workers have a job and cuts off benefits. This practice is known as "deeming". Rather than acknowledging the unique barriers to employment that people with disabilities face, deeming forces injured workers and their families into poverty and shifts the responsibility for compensation of injured workers from employers onto publicly-funded social assistance.

What would you do as an MPP to end deeming?