

Hello Everyone, my brothers and sisters. My name is Maryam Nazemi and I am an injured worker. I am here on behalf of Women of Inspiration and honored to speak with you about the issues that is so dear to injured workers.

Everyone who goes to work in the morning should leave at the end of day with the same health. No one should sacrifice their health and their lives for the unsafe workplace and ultimately for the paycheque. When a worker is injured or killed on the job it is a tragic event. These tragic events really hurt the family, friends, colleagues and society at large. Now we want you to join me for the moment of silence for our fallen workers and for those who got injured on the job.

When a worker suffers an injury or illness, there must be a social safety net to ensure they do not fall into poverty and further sickness. There must be social safety net to ensure they do not fall into poverty. There must be a Workers Compensation system that offers fair and just compensation. All workers in Ontario and across Canada deserve this. Unfortunately, over one third of workers in Ontario are not covered by workers compensation law. I found it shameful, to leave millions without protection. The majority of these workers are women, working in gender jobs. Other vulnerable segment of non-covered jobs also held by newcomers and racialized communities. This is a total discrimination that people on Ontario can not allowed.

This flaw in our compensation system almost took my life. I was one of those workers without converge. As a Montessori, Early childhood educator I was not covered by compensation, and left with massive spinal cord injury, end with emergency surgery, with small chance to walk again. without protection or prevention, I went back work to the same job same responsibility. Modified work was a foreign word to my employer. After a year I was asked by all my specialist to stop working entirely. That was the darkest years and decades of my life. My fault was being gifted to work with special needs children. After my EI ended There was no government support for me. My family and I faced the most struggling time, financially, socially, and emotionally. My day to day struggles strengthens my devotion to join the labor community and continue to lobby at all time for UC, and raise awareness about uncovered, precarious workplaces.

Only 55% of private sector employment provide coverage for their workers and this has a very negative consequences for health and safety and our social fabric. So, if there is no compensation the cost of an injury is shifted to the social

assistance, ODSP, and OHIP system and the taxpayers money, and employers get off the hook getting richer. These workers have become invisible workers of Ontario with no voice, no safety net, no unions, and private insurance to support them in case of injury. This is so not right and ethical that governments of Ontario and their colleagues to know this reality and sweep it under the rug, pretending this constantly growing issue does not exist. Let us remember that as long as people are not covered there is privatization, the danger of privatization increases.

Brothers and sisters if you want to drive a car you must buy insurance, if you want to get a place to live you need to have insurance but the employers of Ontario do not need to ensure their employees, while they run their business. The reality is, there should not be a place for voluntarily contribution, ---- government of Ontario must cover all workers in our province and make a mandatory law to cover all workers, --- after all this is the province that we all love and belong to. Ontario is about providing, preventing and protecting all workers equally. I hope one day soon with solidarity from all walk of life we celebrate what this province deserved to have. Mandatory Universal Compensation system.

The saddest thing is that the government of Ontario does not know the current level of coverage in Ontario and how does it compare to the level of coverage documented in the Jackson's report decades ago.

Remember that we all have the potential to be injured workers--- all it takes is one fall, one twist, one cut... this is why we need a fair and just compensation system for those who have been hurt, and those who will be hurt in the future, and for the workplace health and safety of our new generation.

The WOI is also so proud of our Workers Compensation is a right campaign and later on during our program, everyone will find out what an empowering job is been done through this campaign to ensure the voice of injured workers are heard, and justice is served for injured workers. Let us remind our government that injured workers can not be Deemed; Compensation is their given right ---- Compensation is injured workers' right. END DEEMING

Again, I want to thank you all for taking your time to come and celebrate our vigil and SUPPORT WOI. Let us BE SURE that not only all workers in Ontario be covered, also the word Deeming is diminished.

Thank you all for coming and let's begin our program