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**MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT INTRODUCES  
LEGISLATION TO END MANDATORY RETIREMENT**  
*Plan Offers Fairness And Choice; Protects Existing Rights And Benefits*

TORONTO — The McGuinty government is introducing legislation that would end mandatory retirement and provide greater fairness and choice for workers aged 65 and older, Labour Minister Chris Bentley announced today.

“People are healthier and living longer so it is unfair to insist that they stop working simply because they turn 65,” said Bentley. “Ending mandatory retirement would allow workers to retire based on lifestyle, circumstance and priorities. We listened to the needs and concerns of business, labour and others who have consulted with us and are doing this in a way that protects existing rights to pension, early retirement and benefit plans.”

The Ontario Human Rights Code currently does not protect people aged 65 and over from age discrimination for employment purposes. As a result, employees can be forced to retire at age 65. If passed, the proposed legislation would amend the code and a variety of other statutes that have provisions connected to mandatory retirement.

Among other things, the legislation would:

- Become effective one year after it receives Royal assent
- Continue to allow mandatory retirement where it can be justified on “*bona fide* occupational requirement” grounds determined under the Human Rights Code (i.e. where there is a requirement or qualification necessary for the performance of essential job duties).

The government held public meetings across the province last September to promote discussion and gather public input on mandatory retirement, hearing from 50 groups and more than 100 individuals. The legislation being introduced today responds to the issues raised.

“After listening to the concerns of the people of Ontario, we’ve taken a fair and responsible approach in preparing this legislation,” said Bentley. “It’s a topic with complex issues. We believe the outcome will be to the benefit of all Ontarians.”

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