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For Immediate Release
April 27, 2006

ONTARIO GOVERNMENT PROPOSES NEW CHAIR FOR WSIB

Strong New Leader Would Bring Greater Accountability

QUEEN'S PARK – The Ontario government is continuing the renewal of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) by nominating a new Chair.

Today, the Government of Ontario has nominated former MPP and federal Cabinet Minister Steve Mahoney as Chair of the Board of Directors, subject to review by the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. If confirmed by the standing committee and appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, Mahoney would take over from current acting Chair Jill Hutcheon, who will remain as President.

The new Chair will continue the work begun by Hutcheon to rebuild the WSIB and ensure a strong agency for future workers and employers. The WSIB has already made great strides in its efficiency, effectiveness and financial stability.

Mahoney would bring over 25 years of experience at the municipal, provincial and federal levels of government, including one year as Federal Secretary of State for Crown Corporations. Mahoney was also previously Labour critic in the Ontario legislature.

He is currently President and Chief Executive Officer of Mahoney International Group, which specializes in the marketing of new products and concepts, and helps clients develop business strategies.

“The renewal of the WSIB initiated by the McGuinty government will continue,” said Labour Minister Steve Peters. “We believe Steve Mahoney shares our government’s commitment to ensuring injured workers are treated with dignity, fairness and respect, and that the WSIB achieves its prevention goals while operating in a fiscally responsible and efficient way.”

The WSIB provides disability benefits to workers through a no-fault insurance plan, facilitates the early and safe return to work of injured workers and oversees Ontario’s workplace safety prevention and training system. In 2004, an independent audit of the WSIB recommended that the government act to separate the positions of Board Chair and President.

-30-

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