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HELPING NEWCOMERS UNDERSTAND THEIR RIGHTS IN THE WORKPLACE *McGuinty Government Launches Outreach Program To Help Newcomers Succeed In The Workplace*

TORONTO – The McGuinty government is reaching out to help newcomers understand their rights and responsibilities so that they can stay safe and succeed in the workplace, Labour Minister Steve Peters announced today.

“Newcomers – both as employees and employers – bring energy and dedication to the Ontario economy,” said Peters. “Our government wants to help them understand their new workplace rights and responsibilities so we are going out to employer and community associations to reach them directly.”

Over the next three months, the Parliamentary Assistant to the Labour Minister, Mario G. Racco, will bring a health and safety and employment standards education campaign to various groups. He begins with the Canadian Arab Federation on Sept. 14, 2006. Other confirmed groups include: the Chinese Professional Association of Canada, the Inter-Cultural Neighbourhood Social Services, the Canadian Netherlands Business & Professional Association, the Korean Canadian Association of Metro Toronto, the Ontario Korean Businessman’s Association and the Federation of Export Clubs of Canada.

“As an immigrant to Ontario, I understand how important it is for newcomers to be able to work and accomplish in their new businesses,” Racco said. “By presenting useful information in a language that is understandable, I hope to help our neighbours achieve the success that they want in their new home.”

“Ontario’s future prosperity depends on the success of newcomers,” said Mike Colle, Ontario Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. “That’s why our government is taking strong and practical action to make sure newcomers know their rights and succeed in the workplace.”

This outreach program is just the latest way in which the government is working to help newcomers understand their labour rights. Other initiatives include:

- Developing community partnerships with the Centre for Information and Community Services (CICS), reaching out to vulnerable workers, providing multilingual information about employment rights
- Launching a two-year partnership agreement with SISO (Settlement and Integration Services Organization) of Hamilton where councillors and staff were trained to explain workers’ rights in over 40 languages

- Ongoing outreach with ministry staff offering presentations to a variety of community organizations.

“The McGuinty government is on the side of newcomers who want the opportunity to succeed,” said Peters. “When newcomers succeed, Ontario succeeds.”

Information about employment workplace rights and responsibilities is available in 23 languages on the Ministry of Labour website at www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/es/index_languages.html

-30-

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