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March 28, 2011

Professor Harry Arthurs
WSIB Funding Review
200 Front St. West
Toronto, Ontario
M5V 3J1

Bright Lights Injured Workers Group Presentation, April 27, 2011

Dear Professor Arthurs:

Please find enclosed our written submission. It contains some of the various letters our group has written, over the years, on the issues you are considering.

Our group is called Bright Lights because of earlier political concerns about the “unfunded liability”. In the mid nineties this issue raised its political head and the Board fired then Chair Odoardo DiSanto to replace him with a business executive from General Electric, Mr. Bill Blundell (who headed the transition team). One of our members quipped: “we do not need new light bulbs, we need some bright lights”. This is how our name started.

As you know, we were beaten twice over our heads, as injured workers, when the “unfunded liability” became a concern. First we had the Friedland formula (Bill 165). Then we had an even worse Friedland formula and other cuts (Bill 99). We wonder if the future holds the same. We did get our new private sector executive, Mr. David Marshall. What will come next? Is history to be repeated?

Professor Arthurs, our group is made up of injured workers who gave their best to Ontario, and continue to give their very best. We come together regularly to support each other and try to keep up with the changes that affect us as injured workers. We may not have a lot of political weight, but we have a lot of moral weight as we are the very purpose of the compensation system.

As you read our letters, please note the following: 1) How long we have battled with these issues; 2) How the debate on the unfunded liability has resulted in losses and cuts to our benefits and dignity, 3) How reasonable arguments have been ignored, 4) How many of us are in poverty and suffer from physical and emotional stress and social isolation; 5) How we struggle with feelings of helplessness and hopelessness after being for so long.

On the 27th of April we want to speak to the following issues: Funding/ Unfunded Liability; Employer incentive programs, Premium rate setting, and indexation of benefits.

Thank you for reading our background materials we worked so many years to build.
Thank you holding the hearings and giving us a chance to be heard.

Sincerely,

Sheelagh MacDonald

Beryl Brown