

Ministry of Labour

Ministère du Travail

Office of the Minister

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Petition 5

Petition relating to Bill 119 Amendments to the WSIA (Sessional Paper No. P-5)

Tabled by Mr. Jeff Yurek on February 20, 2013 and February 27, 2013

Thank you for your petition.

This government believes in taking into account the needs of Ontario's workers and businesses.

In developing the mandatory coverage in construction amendments contained in the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Amendment Act, 2008* (Bill 119), the government was mindful of the costs to business and considered the costs to business when developing the proposal.

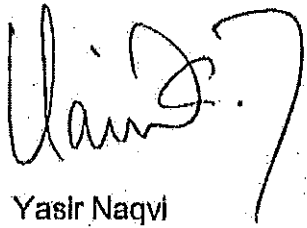
An exemption is provided for independent operators, sole proprietors, partners in a partnership and executive officers of corporations who work exclusively in home renovation when they are engaged directly by occupants of existing residences. The purpose of this exemption is to avoid unduly burdening small home renovation businesses.

Likewise, to avoid burdening businesses, one partner per partnership or one executive officer per corporation may be exempt from mandatory coverage. To be eligible for this exemption, the executive officer or partner cannot perform construction work at any time. However, this condition does not prevent them from performing "non-construction work," such as attending meetings on a construction site.

Between passage of the legislation in November 2008 and proclamation of the one year pre-registration provisions in January 2012, the WSIB worked with construction stakeholders to assess and develop the necessary policies, systems and administrative processes needed to implement the amendments and related regulation which came fully into effect on January 1, 2013. It also conducted a public awareness campaign for the construction industry including speaking engagements to stakeholder groups throughout 2012, mailings, print ads, radio spots and various other outreach initiatives.

Our government believes these amendments to the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997* will help workers and employers. Extending coverage will help fight the underground economy in construction. The underground economy undermines health and safety standards, puts lives at risk, and erodes construction quality. It also puts businesses that play by the rules at a competitive disadvantage. The amendments also help more individuals working in the construction industry get WSIB benefits, services and supports, helping them to recover and return to the workforce.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yasir Naqvi', written in a cursive style.

Yasir Naqvi
Minister