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Hello and good morning to everyone. I'm glad to be here today and to have been given this opportunity to voice concerns regarding the LHINS also known as - or better known as Local Health Integration Network. This group which comprises of 14 regional boards throughout our province – are appointed – not elected. Also, the LHINS have very little or no medical background.

First of all before going any further I will introduce myself and share a little of my history with you. My name is Brenda Clapp and I'm employed with the Ministry of the Attorney General. I have spent the past 27 years working in the offices of the Superior Court of Justice.

Also, during these 27 years I have been a proud and active unionist with the Ontario Public Service Employees Union. Currently I hold an elected position on my local's executive as President of Local 710. I will say that OPSEU has worked intensely to ensure that the best public services possible are provided to the people of Ontario – such as excellence in Health Care.

Throughout this time I have witnessed many changes none however so radical, so far reaching to the wellbeing of the people within our communities.

As you can determine, I'm not a Health Care Worker but am here today to lend my full support to the Ontario Health Coalition, to ONA, to CUPE, to SEIU and OPSEU in their joint endeavors to preserve and enhance an already viable Health Care system.

(Ontario Nurses Association – Canadian Union Public Employees – Service Employees International Union – Ontario Public Service Employees Union)

These 4 unions represent 200,000 Health Care Workers and are prepared to fight the LHINS. These 4 unions are speaking on behalf of the people of Ontario as the documents the LHINS propose - have been rushed through two readings at the legislature and without consultation to Ontarians.

Our Health Care system is second to none and is recognized around the globe as one of the best if not the best in the world. The hospitals in the communities deliver a universal level of health care (it is believed that Bill 36 will allow the LHINS to close many community hospitals and organize the medical services somewhere outside the present community) Our present Health Care System does

not discriminate who you are, what you are and especially not where you are in the province of Ontario when you need medical care. All people are given quality medical attention in our hospitals because it is available in our communities across this province.

I ask that you focus for just a moment on the word “Authority”

An example of an authority can be when the lights in an aircraft turn on telling you to stay seated and do up your seatbelts....this authority comes from the pilot and is there to keep you and I safe

Another example of authority can be a parent setting an 11:00 pm curfew for a teenager....this authority is there to keep the teenager safe

Now I ask - Who is the authority with LHINS? The LHINS are appointed - not elected democratically. Who will ensure that Ontarians are safe and will have access to multiple medical services now offered in our communities within our hospitals?

LHINS is aiming to allow Health Care Providers to bid low for services. Is this what we want our Health Care system to become – BID FOR PROFIT?

Providers of services will cut corners to reduce their costs and the care you receive will suffer. The quality of health care will diminish, hospitals may close, and services now available within these hospitals will be severed and transferred causing negative effects across this province and in our communities. Bill 36 – “Integration of the local system for the delivery of health services” is mainly comprised of grey areas with no successful model to compare to.

Local Health Integration Network is moving toward having only specific services available at very specific hospitals. They are already speaking of Hip Replacement Surgery and Cataract Surgery being in a specific locations within Ontario.

Because so many of us have had Cancer or have had family member with Cancer I will use the Oncology Unit and the Cancer Treatment Centre at the Thunder Bay Regional Hospital as my example to you in an attempt to localize the devastation the LHINS plan can cause those of us living in Northwestern Ontario.

The Oncology Unit at the Thunder Bay Regional Hospital is where people go to receive medical treatment after cancer surgery and cancer recovery take place. Many patients return to hospital after chemotherapy and radiation therapy because of the

many ill sides effects. Once patients go home they can now contact doctors and nurses at Oncology or at the Cancer Treatment Centre via telephone for personal consultation regarding their on going health issues.

NOW the big question is???? If the LHINS decide that the Oncology Unit and Cancer Treatment Centre at the Thunder Bay Regional Hospital should relocate to another site in Ontario what would this mean to our patients, to their families, and to the Health Care Workers who provide these life saving services?

Many of our patients would incur a great financial burden. The expense of traveling (flights) to another community for health care, accommodation while away from home (hotel/motel), meals and time off work for the family member caring for the patient. This my friends undoubtedly create a 2 tier health care system. If you can pay for health care services you will receive them.

Now - for the workers, the LHINS scheme would mean re-applying for jobs when a new employer takes over with no guarantee of keeping your benefits or pensions. (No job security) This would certainly

lead to other economic losses and deter other health care workers from locating in our community.

The boards have been ordered to merge, transfer, and combine health services. If the LHINS don't do what has been mandated - the government simply moves in and does the job themselves. This definitely indicates that services as well as jobs will be disappearing as we now know them.

In view of the fact that my background is with the Superior Court of Justice I will touch on some of the factors that apply to the court system and these facts were noted in the documents labeled HEALTH LAW put together by the law firm of Cassels Brock & Blackwell. "Health Service Providers could request the reconsideration of LHINS' integration decisions and Minister's orders within 30 days of receiving the decision". LHINS and the Minister could enforce integration decisions and ministerial orders by applying to the Superior Court of Justice for an order - directing the party to the integration order - to comply. It is believed that these orders will allow the LHINS and Hospital Service Providers the ability to override existing collective agreements.

Our collective agreements protect our jobs, protect our members, protect our public services and have ensured a safe health care system for all Ontarians to enjoy.

Its time to get involved – contact your local MPP, tell others about the LHINs, and write letters to the editor.

We Ontarians can no longer trust the McGuinty government to protect our public health care system.