



Key issues in the Feb. 14 offer

1. Your job at risk

Contracting out is a dangerous waste of taxpayers' money and the number one threat to your job security. Your OPSEU bargaining teams have called for a moratorium on contracting out. Your employer **ignored** this demand in its Feb. 14 offer.

2. Your wages too low

The employer's offer of 1.95 per cent in each successive year of a three-year deal won't even give back half of what you've lost to inflation since 1994. MPPs get a 36.6 per cent wage increase. What do you get?

3. Your pension fund attacked

Your employer wants to stop you from using money in the OPSEU Pension Trust – **your own money** – to pay for Factor 80 and other pension improvements. It's straightforward **theft**.

4. Your career path blocked

Your employer wants to create a new kind of worker called a "term classified," with some benefit and pension rights but no job security. This would let the boss eliminate the posting, filling and creation of classified jobs – and **block you from promotion, transfer, or conversion to classified status**. In the area of posting, the employer wants to be able to hire people **without holding competitions** in cases where a favourite candidate has competed for a "similar" job anywhere in the OPS in the last 12 months.

5. Pets rewarded

Your employer wants to make favouritism a recognized part of the wage plan. Your boss could use "pay for performance" as a not-so-subtle form of discipline for "troublemakers" – such as union activists standing up for the rights of their co-workers.

6. Your conversion prevented

The employer wants to turn the conversion process into a slippery treadmill on which unclassified members can hardly ever get ahead. That's wrong. The loopholes that prevent conversion should be closed. Unclassified workers should be converted to classified status after one year, not two.

7. Your retirement delayed

The employer has offered to extend the Factor 80 early retirement plan **for surplused employees only** for the life of the contract. Not good enough! Those who want to retire voluntarily, once they have the right combination of age and years of service, must be able to do so when **they** want – not just when the boss says it's okay.

8. Your classification issue ignored

Many OPSEU members are wrongly paid and classified for their work. Your union bargaining teams tabled a simple, effective proposal to resolve classification disputes. The employer ignored it.

9. Your special case ignored

Fed up by being wrongly paid for the work they are actually doing, OPSEU members in nearly 100 different jobs put their issue forward as a "special case" in bargaining. The employer ignored them **all** in its offer.

10. Your benefits capped

Working in the OPS is more and more stressful and health costs are rising. The employer wants to take away some of your benefits by putting caps on coverage. This would mean **less health care** for you and your family. It's time coverage for your eyes, ears, teeth, hospital stays, and other health care needs caught up to the real costs.

Reject this offer! Give your teams a strike mandate to bargain the "A" contract you deserve!



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Government offer “stuck in the past;” union urges rejection

TORONTO – Bargaining teams for the Ontario Public Service Employees Union are calling on 45,000 unionized workers to reject a Feb. 14 contract offer from the Harris government.

“This is an offer from a government that is stuck in the past,” said OPSEU president Leah Casselman. “Looking at their offer, it’s as if the Tories don’t know that the Walkerton tragedy ever happened. It’s as if the Andersen Consulting fiasco never happened. It’s as if they didn’t hear when the provincial auditor sounded the alarm over our food safety and our road safety.

“Ontarians everywhere are saying that it’s time to rebuild our public service and restore its ability to protect public safety and the public interest,” said Casselman. “This offer is meant to allow the Tories to carry on their program of destruction.”

Casselmann pointed to two areas of special concern in the offer: contracting out and wages.

“Whether we look at the provincial auditor’s reports or the Walkerton Inquiry, it’s clear that this government doesn’t have a clue what it’s doing with privatization,” she said. “They’re paying consultants two, three, and more times what it would cost to have accountable public employees doing the same work. In some cases they’re putting people’s lives at risk. Yet they’ve completely ignored our call for a moratorium on contracting out.

“On wages, they don’t seem to care that skilled, experienced people are bailing out of the public service as fast as they can,” Casselman said. “How can we attract technologists to work in public health labs, for example, when community hospitals are paying 20 per cent more? We can’t.”

Inflation has cut the wages of OPS employees by 12 per cent in the last eight years, Casselman noted. “OPSEU members are used to sacrifice, but this offer is pretty hard to swallow when MPPs are getting a 36.6 per cent pay raise.”

Casselmann also condemned the government for a “vicious attack” on the OPSEU pension plan.

“Preventing people from retiring is not an ethical way to deal with the fact that you can’t recruit new people to work in the public service,” she said.

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