

CHOOSE PUBLIC

Keep **ServiceOntario** safe and secure.

January 26, 2012

MEMO TO: All OPSEU members in ServiceOntario
All Local Presidents with OPS members

FROM: President Warren (Smokey) Thomas, OPSEU
Roxanne Barnes, Chair, Central Enforcement and Renewal Committee
James Cushing, Chair, Ministry of Government Services Enforcement
and Renewal Committee

Subject: Campaign to oppose the privatization of ServiceOntario

Dear Friends,

We expect a recommendation to privatize ServiceOntario will come in the next several weeks.

Media stories on the still-secret report by retired banker Don Drummond hint heavily that he has recommended privatization. We know the government has been examining this option since last spring's budget. Premier Dalton McGuinty must reject this plan.

The protection of our personal, private information is at risk.

We believe the privatization of ServiceOntario will result in:

- Increased risk of identity theft and fraud;
- The loss of government revenue that funds programs like health care and education;
- Higher user fees for the public; and
- The closure of some ServiceOntario counters.

There is no economic argument for privatizing ServiceOntario. Consider these numbers:

- ServiceOntario processes 48 million transactions annually;
- It has an operating budget of \$270.4 million each year; and
- It contributes **\$2.7 billion** to government revenues annually, more than either the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (\$1.9 billion) or the LCBO (\$1.55 billion).

ServiceOntario collects \$10 in revenue for every \$1 dollar it spends!

Why would the government risk identity theft and fraud when ServiceOntario is highly profitable as is?

71 per cent of Ontarians oppose the privatization of ServiceOntario, according to a survey commissioned by OPSEU last fall and carried out by OraclePoll Research.

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75 per cent of Ontarians are concerned about a private company having access to, and the ability to control and make changes to, sensitive personal information.

When we say privatization, we mean either the sale of ServiceOntario to a private corporation or a so-called “public-private partnership”.

Either way, a private corporation will have access to at least 11 data bases of people’s private information, including personal taxable income.

It will rake in billions of dollars in profit from the basic government services that people need to live and work in Ontario, including:

- Driver and vehicle licensing;
- Ontario Health Card registrations and renewals;
- Companies registrations and searches;
- Land titles’ registration and searches;
- Birth, marriage and death certificates.

It’s bad enough that more than 200 ServiceOntario offices in this province are run by private contractors for a profit.

What will happen to government oversight if these 200 private contractors report not to the government of Ontario but to a private corporation?

What will happen to the 87 ServiceOntario counters currently run by the government? Will they be closed if they don’t make a profit?

This is a fight for all of us in the Ontario Public Service. Since 2008, ServiceOntario has aggressively expanded to take over services once delivered by government ministries. The union has been told that social assistance, (Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program), social housing and the Family Responsibility Office could all be added to a privatized ServiceOntario.

Join our campaign:

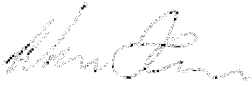
1. All ServiceOntario members to **wear a purple Choose Public wristband**;
2. **Post the attached flyer** on union bulletin boards and distribute to members;
3. **Lobby your MPP.**

We ask Local Presidents to designate a steward at each ServiceOntario worksite to receive and distribute the wristbands. Please complete the attached form and fax OPSEU Communications (416) 443-1762 or e-mail to mdiadamo@opseu.org.

The government must ask itself: do we want a repeat of the scandal at air ambulance provider Ornge with its million-dollar salaries for those at the top?

The privatization of ServiceOntario will lead to a situation where the only priorities are profits for the company and higher user fees for the public.


In solidarity,



Warren (Smokey) Thomas
President



Roxanne Barnes
CERC Chair



James Cushing
MGS MERC Chair

WT/mp

Cc: OPSEU Executive Board Members
Cuts Hurt Us All mobilizers