



Carpenters' District Council of Ontario



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Carpenters' Union Calls for Action NOW!

March 23, 2020 – Toronto, ON – Carpenter's District Council of Ontario, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America (the "Carpenters") is today calling on the Premier and the Minister of Labour to temporarily halt all construction in the Province of Ontario.

Despite the COVID-19 global pandemic and the emergency situation which has been declared, so far the Government of Ontario has not shut down the construction industry and at least some employers are trying to carry on with work on their jobsites and projects. However, the situation which exists on most jobsites means that work simply cannot go on as normal. Many jobsites have no facilities for workers to even wash their hands using soap and hot water and "social distancing" is just not possible.

"As Premier Ford announced today, the construction workers of this Province should not be expected to work on jobsites where the basic safety requirements for COVID-19 are not being met", said Tony Iannuzzi, the Executive Secretary Treasurer of the Carpenters' Union. "Those minimum standards simply do not exist on most of our jobsites now and we cannot get Ministry of Labour inspectors out to deal with problems our members are having", added Mr. Iannuzzi.

The Carpenters agree that a "one size solution does not fit all" but the onus should be put on employers to make sure that their particular jobsites are safe and in compliance with the COVID-19 protocols before construction workers have to work on those jobsites. It is for this reason that the Carpenters are calling for all construction projects to shut down for fourteen (14) days. "A temporary closure of jobsites will allow employers who believe work on their projects can be carried on safely to get the jobsites inspected by the Ministry of Labour and once that has been done our members and their families will know that work can proceed safely", said Mr. Iannuzzi.

Members of the Carpenters want to work building this Province but not at the risk of their health and that of their families. That is why the Carpenters' Union is urging the Premier and the Minister of Labour to take this step.

About the Carpenters' District Council of Ontario (CDCO)

The Carpenters' District Council of Ontario ("CDCO") is composed of 16 affiliated Local Unions of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners across the province. In total, we represent over 30,000 women and men working in a wide range of skilled trades, including carpentry, drywall, resilient flooring, concrete formwork, underwater construction, welding, scaffolding, and a long list of other construction-related work.

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