



Good Jobs for All

A COMMUNITY-LABOUR COALITION

Good Jobs for All wants Toronto to move forward instead of backward. We think cleaners in every sector deserve to make a living wage. And so do people working at other jobs being targeted by the Ford administration. As a city, we can stand up for good jobs that will not just raise standards for workers, but also strengthen our neighbourhoods and communities.

You can make a difference – by calling or e-mailing your City Councillor and telling them that City Council should oppose turning decent jobs into poverty wage jobs.

Take action now – phone 311 or go to goodjobsforall.ca and send your message to the Councillor who represents you at City Hall.

goodjobsforall.ca

JUSTICE AND DIGNITY FOR CLEANERS

DON'T TURN DECENT JOBS INTO POVERTY WAGE JOBS!

Mayor Ford says he wants to outsource the jobs of hundreds of City cleaners, and turn them over to low-wage contractors. It doesn't seem to matter to his administration that those will become poverty wage jobs. But it should matter to the rest of us – and our City Councillors.

For decades, the people who clean office towers and commercial buildings have struggled to try to improve their pay and working conditions. But the dog-eat-dog system of cleaning contractors has undercut those efforts time and again.

For working families, an income of \$11 or \$12 an hour is hardly enough to get by. Poverty jobs should never be the goal of the City of Toronto.

goodjobsforall.ca

There are already too many jobs in Toronto that pay poverty wages.

In some cases, the companies involved in contract cleaning have grown immensely rich from their operations. Some are in the Fortune 500, with revenues in the billions. Others are cut-throat operations that have a history of exploiting immigrants and violating employment standards.

But there is more at stake here than poor wages. The plan to outsource jobs will start in police stations, where the question of security has always been a major concern. As outsourcing spreads into other facilities such as long-term care, any attempt by companies to cut corners can have a major impact on the health or safety of vulnerable residents.

VOICES OF CLEANERS



NELIA BETTENCOURT

“ I’m a Heavy Duty Cleaner at the Toronto Police Service. I wash the floors, steam the carpet, clean the cells and washrooms, pick up garbage and more. I’ve been doing this for 9 years. We are there every day, and we are all almost like family to each other. There’s a familiarity and trust we’ve developed and that’s important, especially in a police station where there’s sensitive information and security issues.

I used to work with a private cleaning company where I made \$11 an hour and got only five hours a day with no benefits. That’s how they made their money. I had to work two jobs. Now at the city, I have a decent wage, benefits, and more job security.

Unfortunately, if the Mayor outsources cleaning to a private company, not only will I be let go, but those standards will also go down. Personally, it scares me to think about how I would support my son’s medical expenses with no job and no benefits. There are many more people like me with families to support.”



JULIO SILVA

“ For almost 10 years, I worked for various private cleaning contractors and saw up close the kind of cut-throat operations they ran. The pay was so low that I had to work three different jobs to make ends meet.

My fellow cleaners and I struggled very hard to try to unionize ourselves so that we could have a little bit of protection. It was really difficult because the employer tried various tactics to intimidate us. We won a first contract, which was a step in the right direction and gave us hope.

I am now working as a custodian at the school board. I have only one job and when I am done work, I can go home to my family without worrying about how to pay the bills. But there are still thousands of cleaners who are struggling in Toronto for better working conditions. They look to their counterparts in the public sector to raise the standards just a little bit. Unfortunately we have a Mayor who is trying to push hundreds of cleaners into that same situation. It just doesn’t make sense for our city.”



NEZRENE EDWARDS

“ For 20 years, I have been a Toronto housing cleaner. The residents here know me and I know my work makes a difference for them. Every morning, I come in and clean the grounds, the buildings, compact the garbage, hose the floor to clear maggots and bugs. It’s not pretty, and I am responsible for work that many people would just find really difficult to do. We get shots to prevent things like hepatitis because there is a real risk of getting sick. People need to understand that just because we pick up dirt doesn’t mean we should be treated like dirt. We deserve to be treated with dignity.

I feel bad for some of the cleaners that private contractors bring in while me or my colleagues are on vacation. They get really low pay for doing difficult work. It’s just not fair because all the money ends up in the contractor’s pockets when the cleaners are basically making minimum wage.”