

*The 5 per cent lower start rate:*

## The ‘Race to the Bottom’ begins

Many current OPS employees feel that the employer’s proposal for a new lower start rate doesn’t really affect them. If you are a permanent, full-time member, at the top of your wage grid, and never plan on applying for a new job or classification, then you are correct.

**For everyone else in the OPS, the effects are profound.** If you are in the middle of the grid, then the employer’s entire 12 step proposal is all based on that lower start rate, dragging down your increases. If you get a new job or classification, you start at the bottom step all over again. If you are converted from fixed-term (FXT) to permanent, the employer says you are a “new hire” ...and you start at the lowest step even if you were higher on the grid previously. The union has asked for a definition of a “new hire,” but the employer is opposed, of course, to providing this.

Lastly, if you are new to the OPS...well, **get used to the fact that the employer has decided that younger employees are worth less than older employees in this new economy.** The income gap between the older and younger workers keeps growing.

According to Conference Board of Canada, from 1984 to 2010 the average disposable income of Canadians aged 50-54 has grown compared to those 25-29 years of age. The gap, which was 47 per cent between these two groups in the mid-1980s, **is now 64 per cent.**

This employer’s proposal to reduce your salary grid by another 5 per cent will only increase the divide. Rather than show leadership and reverse this trend, Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals want to hurt young workers even further.

**Now is the time to protect ALL workers in the OPS...**even those who will follow us into the public service one day. Those workers will be our future, and the future of the services we all rely upon.

Please continue to support your Bargaining Teams.

*Authorized by:*

*Roxanne Barnes, Chair, Central/Unified Team*

*Tom O’Neill, Chair, Corrections Team*

*Warren (Smokey) Thomas, President*

