



February 23, 2009

The Honourable Dwight Duncan
Minister of Finance
c/o Pension and Income Security Policy Branch
5th Floor, Frost Building South
7 Queen's Park Crescent
Toronto, ON M7A 1Y7

Dear Minister:

It is with pleasure that I attach OPSEU's brief in response to the recommendations of Ontario's Expert Commission on Pensions.

OPSEU has had pensions at the top of our reform agenda since the early days of our Association – the Civil Service Association of Ontario. Indeed, we have always played an active role in government consultation on pensions: we submitted briefs to the Royal Commission on the Status of Pensions in 1981, the Parliamentary Task Force on Pensions in 1983 and the Friedland Task Force in 1987.

We particularly appreciate the direction of Professor Arthur's report in recognizing pensions as, fundamentally, a labour relations issue. Pensions have been a subject of controversy between labour and employers and to gloss over these different interests would not provide us a way forward. The Arthur's report not only addresses the difficult issues but claims to have achieved a 'fine balance' of interests. This is most necessary given the impact of the financial crisis on pension funds.

We also appreciate the departure from the 'one-size-fits-all' approach to pensions and the confirmation of joint governance as a critical step in the road towards responsible pension administration.

We look forward to continuing pension discussions on such a positive note with the Ontario government.

Yours truly,

Warren (Smokey) Thomas
President, OPSEU

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c: Executive Board, Pension Liaison Committee, OPSEU Pension Trustees