# 2017 07 What Have We Done To Deserve This

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Alexis de Tocqueville famously said that in a democratic country, people get the government they deserve. Reviewing the draconian upcoming changes to employment law being made by the governments of Ontario and Alberta, employers can only wonder what we did wrong.

The Ontario government is planning public hearings and accepting written submissions on its proposed Bill 148, which they have tendentiously titled "Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017." Bill 148 proposes drastic changes to Ontario employment law. (It should be noted that Alberta passed similar legislation last month, with the bulk of changes to be in effect by January 1, 2018.

There is a long list of proposed changes including an increase to the minimum wage rate to \$15 per hour by January 1, 2019 (the largest increase in history). Another change would be to add a third week of vacation after 5 years of service.

Among the most concerning provisions, from our perspective, are those which would provide for ten days of personal leave (two of which must be paid) which would no longer be limited to employees who work for large employers (i.e. those with over 50 employees). Every employer would have to provide this benefit. Moreover, as if it weren't difficult enough to manage employee attendance in Canada, employers would be prohibited from asking for a medical note. It is difficult to see how an employer would be able to ensure this leave was not abused. Even worse, the leave days may be taken without any notice to the employer, making scheduling an even greater nightmare than it currently is. We anticipate a booming business for temp agencies.

This public consultation process will likely be your last opportunity to tell the Ontario government about the problems and concerns with Bill 148. You can send a written submission by July 21, 2017. While speaking opportunities are not guaranteed, you can also attend a public hearing by registering through the following steps:

- 1. Email or call Attend the Clerk, Eric Rennie, at 416.325.3506 or by e-mail at <u>ERennie@ola.org</u>.
- 2. Identify: your preferred city and alternative city, your organization, your proposed speaker(s), your street address, phone number and email address.

Hearings are currently scheduled to be held during the week of:

- July 10, 2017- Thunder Bay, North Bay, Ottawa, Kingston and Windsor-Essex during the week.
- July 17, 2017- London, Kitchener-Waterloo, Niagara, Hamilton and Toronto.

For more information, see the government notice.

The changes proposed by Bill 148 are dramatic and would cause significant problems for business. If de Tocqueville was right, I for one don't know what Alberta and Ontario employers have done to deserve this.

# Welcome Karen Tobin!

MBC Legal is delighted to announce that Karen Tobin has joined your team as an Associate Lawyer. Karen practised managementside employment, labour, and human rights law with a national Bay Street firm for several years before holding senior human resources



leadership roles in the federal and provincial public sectors. Karen will be an outstanding resource to our health-care sector employers across the country. She looks forward to hearing from you with any of your HR-law questions: ktobin@mbclegal.ca or 905-825-2268.





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## We are delighted to welcome Maria Turner!

MBC Brokerage is delighted to announce that Maria Turner has joined your team as an Associate. Those of you who have worked in the dental industry for any length of time may know that Maria has been a very successful, boutique, practice-management adviser to dentists for decades. At MBC, we receive a lot of referrals from myriad professionals in the health-care industries we serve; few are



so highly valued and trusted by their clients as Maria. Maria will also be working with the Legal Division of MBC to offer our clients comprehensive occupational health and safety programs and training. If you, like many doctors, need assistance to ensure you are complying with your complex OHS obligations at law, contact Maria today: maria@mbcbrokerage.ca or 905-825-2268.

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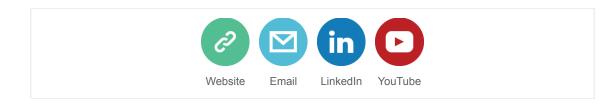
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