

Jones opposes College of Trades

Speaking for skilled trade workers in her riding, Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones rose in the legislature recently to support a Progressive Conservative motion to abolish the College of Trades and its unfair fee schedule.

The fees are imposed on 157 trades across the province, according to a news release issued by Jones' office.

"We have skilled trade workers in the province of Ontario who are already regulated and licensed," said Jones. "All you're doing with this College of Trades is creating more red-tape and an additional expense to trade workers' ability to earn a living."

"This College of Trades tax could actually make a difference between whether a skilled tradesperson stays in Ontario or moves to another province," which is shameful," Jones added. "What we should be talking about in this chamber is how to grow jobs and how to make jobs."

Jones said she has heard from many local skilled trade workers, employers and businesses who believe the mandatory annual fee is excessive. For some skilled trades, the fee represents an increase of 600 per cent, when compared to the previous amount of \$20 a year to renew a certificate or qualification administered by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. These changes will have a negative impact on business and job creation and work against the promotion of skilled trades in Ontario.

The PC motion was defeated by a vote of 48 to 35.

"My PC colleagues and I believe that strengthening Ontario's skilled trades is a key factor in getting Ontario's economy growing again and, if elected, we will eliminate the College of Trades," she said. "Ontario can lead this country in job creation again, but only if bold action is taken to reverse the current direction we are headed. The PC Caucus discussion paper, Paths to Prosperity: An Agenda for Growth, outlines a number of proposals for jobs and our economy."