

Working Families Coalition Corrupting Democracy in Ontario

Toronto, May 28, 2014 – An examination of Ontario government spending over the period from fiscal years 2003/2004 to 2012/2013 shows that the unions behind the union front group known as Working Families Coalition received over \$83 million from taxpayers in what can only be interpreted as a payoff for their high-profile interference in election campaigns during those years. "It is well-known that Working Families Coalition spends many millions of their union members' dues on high profile, expensive advertising to interfere with the democratic process in Ontario elections," said Working Canadians spokesperson Catherine Swift. "What Working Families does here in Ontario would be illegal in any other Canadian jurisdiction, and it should be illegal here too. I'm sure many of those unions' members do not appreciate their dues being spent in such a reckless, partisan and irresponsible manner."

Average Ontarians need to know that their heavy tax burden goes in part to these unions who naturally expect a payoff for their costly election interference. This payoff can take place in many ways – the millions of dollars given to the unions as cited above, or the implementation of policies that suit the unions' interests at the cost of all taxpayers. For instance, the so-called College of Trades was promoted strongly by a number of trades-related unions. Pat Dillon, the head of the Working Families Coalition, is heavily involved in the College of Trades, which is really nothing more than a tax on tradespeople in Ontario and not a college at all. "It is no coincidence that the head of Working Families is also a main backer of the College of Trades," said Swift. There are many other examples of Ontario policies that have tilted the playing field even further in favour of unions at the expense of taxpayers, and it is significantly weakening the province's economy and hurting job creation.

A union-backed fund can distort democracy as easily as corporate dollars can. The payouts that have been made to the Working Families union members are as follows:

• Ontario Pipe Trades Council	\$2,860,607.
• International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	\$4,679,737.
• Canadian Auto Workers	\$22,227,587.
• International Union of Operating Engineers	\$10,751,830.
• UA Canadian Political Action Fund	\$6,842,023.
• Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation	\$4,633,330.
• Intl Association of Bridge, Structural Ornamental, Reinforcing Iron Workers	\$7,517,499.
• Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association	\$6,961,474.
• Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario	\$11,339,094.
• International Brotherhood of Boiler Makers	\$2,464,424.
• United Food and Commercial Workers	\$441,129.
• Provincial Building & Construction Trades Council	\$2,400,000.

Swift added, "Regrettably, when big unions co-opt governments, the majority of taxpayers who are not union members, nor want to be, end up on the losing end. This is the kind of situation that has bankrupted Detroit, many California municipalities, Greece etc. Let's start exposing the Working Families Coalition for what they actually are: a coalition of big special interest unions with zero interest in the real working families in this province."

To arrange an interview with Catherine Swift, contact Gisele Lumsden at 647 808-5769.

Working Canadians are volunteer individuals concerned that union leaders have too much influence over government. Due to this influence they drive up taxes, debt and deficits and make it harder for people and businesses to get ahead and create jobs.