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ONTARIO TAKES ACTION TO PROTECT JOBS IN EASTERN ONTARIO

OTTAWA – Tough measures against Quebec contractors, construction workers and aggregate haulers will take effect on Saturday, March 9, 2002, to protect jobs in Ontario, Labour Minister Chris Stockwell announced today.

The goal of the measures, set out in the *Fairness Is A Two-Way Street Act (Construction Labour Mobility)*, 1999, is to level the playing field for Ontario construction workers and contractors.

“This is an issue about jobs and fairness for the people of Ontario,” said Stockwell. “Quebec workers and contractors have been able to work and do business in Ontario trouble-free – yet Ontario residents who want to work and do business in Quebec construction still face many roadblocks.”

The move comes as a result of unsuccessful negotiations with the Quebec government, which refused to remove barriers for Ontario workers and contractors, such as not allowing Ontario contractors to bring their uncertified workers into most of Quebec.

Under the act, firms from Quebec will be shut out from bidding on Ontario government construction projects, including municipal, school board, hospital or other broader public sector projects. Quebec contractors and construction workers will be required to register with Ontario’s Jobs Protection Office and provide proof of competency and fiscal responsibility before they are able to work in Ontario.

“Quebec continues to impose significant barriers to doing business for Ontario construction companies, contractors and sub-trades,” said Stockwell. “Until these barriers are removed, the re-designation will remain in place and will be vigorously enforced.”

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