

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE  
SECRETARIAT SECTION

2013 APR 19 P 5:42


**Canadian Union of  
Public Employees**

34 St. Patrick Street  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5T 1V1  
Tel: (416) 977-1629  
Fax: (416) 977-9546  
www.cupelocal79.org

**Executive Committee:**

*President:*  
Tim Maguire

*First Vice-President:*  
Nancy Murphy

*Vice-President - Chief  
Steward:*  
David Kidd

*Vice-President Equity:*  
Ainsworth Hamilton

*Recording Secretary:*  
Sofia Reno

*Membership Secretary:*  
Linda Rose

*Treasurer:*  
Lily Chang

**Assigned CUPE  
Representatives:**

Derek Lue  
Janet McIvor  
Sharon Rodgers  
Don Styles  
Charles VanVliet

**Bargaining Units:**

*Bridgepoint Hospital*  
- Nurses & Paramedical  
Units  
- Service Units

*City of Toronto*  
- Full-Time  
- Long-Term Care Homes  
& Services Part-Time  
- Recreation Workers  
Part-Time  
- Unit B Part-Time

*Toronto Community  
Housing Corporation*

**SERVING OUR  
MEMBERS  
SINCE  
1942**

April 15, 2013

Mayor Rob Ford, Chair, and  
Members of the Executive Committee  
10<sup>th</sup> floor, West Tower, City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON  
M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor Ford:

**RE: Executive Committee Meeting 30 (Special)  
Item EX30.1 – New Casino and Convention Development in Toronto**

My name is Lily Chang. I am the Treasurer of CUPE Local 79, Toronto's inside workers. I'm deputing to Executive Committee representing over 2000 members working for the City's Employment and Social Services Division. Our members help people access social assistance when they need it and find jobs so that they can be self-sufficient again.

I am deputing in opposition to a casino in Toronto. There are a number of factors that weigh against a casino, but I want to speak to its impact on the City's employment and social services, where our members experience first-hand the hardship our social service infrastructure already faces.

More than ever, these services are challenged to meet a growing demand. In spite of the good work our members do, there are a proportion of Toronto residents who have significant barriers to finding employment. These are known amongst the staff as the hard-to-serve cases because helping them goes far beyond employment supports, to dealing with things like mental health issues, addictions, and homelessness.

Gambling addictions are a significant barrier to employment. Not only can it cost someone their job, but can also mean losing a home. You can't look for work when you don't have a place to live.

Compared to those without gambling problems, problem gamblers have been found to have higher utilization rates of social assistance.

For example, several community officials interviewed for a 2011 report on gambling in Alberta identified problem gambling as a significant source of family breakdown and financial bankruptcies, leading to increased costs for social services.

In Edmonton, where there are five casinos, officials noted specifically that local social services were under stress from problem gambling concerns.

Here in Toronto, the Medical Officer of Health has calculated Toronto could face a doubling of the number of problem gamblers. That could mean more than ten thousand additional people suffering from the most severe form of this addiction and seeking support.

Our members are already managing growing caseloads with limited resources, especially with recent funding decisions that have frozen or decreased budgets.

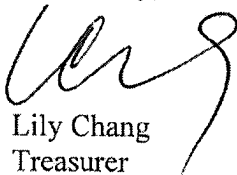
CUPE Local 79 recently surveyed our members about the proposed casino. I would like to share with you a couple of the comments we received from employees in Employment and Social Services Division, who expressed concern about how a casino would impact their work:

“Gambling addiction is shown to increase in proximity to the availability of casinos. There will be more people losing their money, increasing poverty and gambling addictions.”

“More families will need financial help. We are already overwhelmed with our everyday work. We do not have time to deal with people with addiction or family problems.”

From the perspective of someone who has worked in the City’s Employment and Social Services division, the idea of putting a casino in Toronto runs counter to the direction we should be moving in. It will not bring good jobs to the city; it will potentially compete with existing tourist and entertainment infrastructure; and will overwhelm a social service infrastructure already under siege.

Yours truly,



Lily Chang  
Treasurer  
CUPE Local 79