

September 24, 2009,

The Hon. Steve Mahoney, Chair  
Workplace Safety and Insurance Board  
200 Front Street West  
Toronto, Ontario. M5V 3J1

Dear Mr. Mahoney:

**RE: A request for WSIB support for an OHCOW clinic in Thunder Bay**

**I am writing on behalf of**

Because of the nature of our economy, northwestern Ontario has suffered disproportionately from occupational injuries and illnesses for many years. We have lost all too many members of our community. We know the importance of prevention and appreciate the many prevention efforts sparked by WSIB. If we can prevent, and ultimately eliminate, these problems, it will have a major positive impact for workers and employers in northwestern Ontario.

OHCOW has been serving Northwestern Ontario for many years from its clinic in Sudbury. We believe that the time has come to establish an OHCOW clinic in Thunder Bay, to contribute to the well being of workers and workplaces in all of Northwestern Ontario.

OHCOW's clinics have a unique inter-disciplinary approach including occupational physicians, nurses, hygienists and ergonomists. This means that OHCOW can provide workplaces in our region with the full professional expertise required to investigate occupational health conditions – and then to work effectively for prevention.

Our workplace especially needs OHCOW's services to help our organization:

- helping us detect occupational injuries and illnesses
- helping us develop effective programs to prevent ergonomic related disabilities
- helping us develop effective programs to prevent occupational illnesses
- helping us work more effectively with Ontario's prevention system

We know that these are difficult times in Ontario and as you know, our region has been particularly hard hit. This means that resources are limited. But we do hope that you can give consideration to this request. An OHCOW clinic in Thunder Bay will be a modest investment for WSIB but a huge benefit to our region.

Yours Truly,

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Cc: Hon Michael Gravelle, Minister of Northern Development and Mines, and MPP TBSN  
Bill Mauro, MPP Thunder Bay Atikokan  
Melanie Kelso, Thunder Bay Labour Council