

## MUNICIPAL PUBLIC SERVICES UNDER ATTACK

### KEY ISSUES

In the 1990s, the Conservative government downloaded responsibility for services to municipalities without the money needed to pay for them. Cities now pay at least \$3 billion per year to cover downloaded services, yet the Liberal government refuses to pay bills for such services despite having a budget surplus.

The Liberals continue to short change cities for spending on transit, roads, emergency services, housing, daycare, social assistance, literacy, public health and water protection, putting pressure to cut programs and squeeze spending on libraries, water, recycling, snow removal, recreation, parks, disease prevention and food safety.

These conditions are fuelling moves to privatize many services:

- Funding shortfalls are pressuring municipalities to sell off public services and contract out jobs. Liberals and Conservatives encourage cities and towns to contract private corporations to build and operate new arenas, libraries, ambulance headquarters, water and sewage treatment systems. Privatized services destroy good jobs, are more expensive, deliver poorer service, and are not accountable to the public who pays for them.
- The Liberals have considered shifting control of our water systems from municipal governments to unelected boards dominated by private water companies. They refuse to pass laws strong enough to prevent private companies from taking massive amounts of lake and river water for their own profit. As well, the Liberals have downloaded responsibility for keeping our drinking water sources clean to municipalities, conservation authorities and citizen's groups without enough money to do the job.

### THE PARTIES REPORT CARD

#### Conservatives

- Downloaded major services from the province to municipalities without enough funding
- Set up the infrastructure funding programs that still promote privatization and P3s

#### Liberals

- Have not reversed or paid for the bulk of downloaded services from the Harris/Eves years, restoring only some funding for ambulance, transit and public health services
- Will not declare that water is a public trust, and will not protect it from private profiteers

#### NDP

- Have a detailed, workable and realistic plan that will see a complete upload of the costs of all downloaded locally delivered services
- Would ensure that fees from private companies taking water from Ontario's rivers and lakes are high enough to pay for real conservation and protection programs

### CUPE ONTARIO'S POSITION ...

**Our choice: Only the NDP will ensure the provincial government pays for its own programs instead of downloading the costs to municipal property taxes.**