

BILL 59 IS STILL UNACCEPTABLE! – English language transcription of video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QM98y88fTHk>

We, the United Steelworkers, consider that Bill 59 has a detrimental effect on occupational health and safety instead of improving it. It must be rejected.

Minister Boulet is proposing amendments that don't alter the substance of the problem. Only two corrections have been made regarding precautionary cessation of work and forced return to work.

People still feel uneasy about all of the other provisions. The objective of Bill 59 is not to better protect the health and safety of workers but **to reduce costs for employers and increase their profits** ... at the expense of injured or ill workers.

[Visual – fade-in showing Monopoly bank notes on top of an executive summary of Bill 59 amendments, with zoom-in on an excerpt of the Bill's text]

[Text – Objective: more money for bosses]

Yes, that's exactly what it is – more money for employers at the expense of workers! And it's all spelled out **in black and white** in the government's own documents:

.... employers' "benefits" – i.e., profits – could hit 4.3 billion over the next 10 years... and as much as 634 million a year thereafter.

This is money that's taken away from workers who are injured or who become ill in the workplace.

It's nothing short of OB-SCENE.

[SCENE CHANGES TO A COMPARISON WITH THE HIGHWAY CODE]

Imagine if we made similar changes to the rules that protect our health or safety when we're on the road.

Imagine that tomorrow morning the government finds road signage too much of a bother and decides that the costs of compensating accident victims are too high.

[UNION-MANAGEMENT COOPERATION AND PREVENTION]

Imagine how dangerous it would be if stop signs and traffic lights were removed throughout Quebec! Suppose you had to sound your car horn before stepping on the accelerator at every street corner! What do you think would happen?

Well, Bill 59 will have equivalent consequences because it no longer sets minimum prevention requirements:

- no more minimum number of joint health and safety committee meetings...
- no more minimum number of hours for workers' representatives...
- no more minimum protection!

Eliminating minimum standards is **de-reg-u-lation**.
This leaves people... helpless.

[PREVENTION PROGRAM]

Now imagine a gang of road sign experts who have never driven a car in their lives. Imagine that the Quebec government directs them to decide what is necessary AND safe on our roads.

That's more or less what Bill 59 allows:

- it lets employers choose the doctor responsible for occupational health on their own
- and worse still, it lets employers decide on the prevention program ON THEIR OWN.

And yet it is this very prevention program that serves as a guide for assessing risks, determining protective equipment, choosing safe tools and defining the training required to ensure that work is performed safely.

Bill 59 removes the stop signs and traffic lights and lets people who've never been behind a steering wheel drive us... straight into a field!

Deregulation means letting the bosses make decisions on their own.

[MULTIPLE ESTABLISHMENTS]

Now imagine 20 or so worksites along our roads... all under the responsibility of a single contractor.

Imagine that this contractor employs only one traffic control person for all of these sites... and part time at that. And that the site workers and drivers are left to fend for themselves...

Imagine the piling up of risks and the dangers looming ahead... with no one there to see them coming...

Once again, that's exactly what's happening with Bill 59. It waters down prevention by allowing a company to have just one health and safety committee and one prevention representative for all of its workplaces.

If passed, this law will give employers every right to weaken prevention.

Deregulation is dangerous!

[NO FAULT]

Now imagine a victim of a road accident.

An employer who contributes to the CNESST is a bit like a driver who contributes to the SAAQ. These contributions are a form of insurance.

They are used to compensate road accident victims. In exchange, victims cannot sue drivers. This is what's known as a no-fault compensation scheme. Or simply *no-fault*.

Underlying this scheme is a **social contract**: victims can be certain they will receive compensation for a road accident... or, under the existing law, for a workplace accident or occupational disease...

In return, victims do not have the right to sue the person who caused the accident. The law stipulates that employers are responsible for ensuring a safe and healthy workplace and for repairing any harm to workers by protecting their wages and salaries, providing rehabilitation...

Bill 59 breaks that **social contract**.

It introduces measures that aren't intended to reduce the number of workplace accidents and occupational diseases but rather to reduce their costs:

- Such as cutting down on the number of people compensated.
- Such as cutbacks to what they are paid to help them **recover and perform their daily activities**.

It's nothing but cut, cut, cut...

...and at the same time workers have no right to sue their employers even though these same employers bear responsibility for the unsafe work environments.

Is this really what we want?

REMOVING RESPONSIBILITIES

Bill 59 creates roadblocks to recognizing occupational diseases.

- Just think, people will need to be deaf as a post before they're compensated!
- Nothing else is available to help identify musculoskeletal disorders or burnout...
- And workers over 55 with limitations will find themselves without help.

And what's waiting for many victims? Welfare and struggling to make ends meet.

Is this really what we want?

Reducing costs by all possible means the way Bill 59 does amounts to **freeing employers of their responsibilities**.

[CONCLUSION]

The SAAQ Act is a bit like the Health and Safety Act. It's there to protect people – not a company's bottom line.

The government is not going to make our workplaces safer through deregulation and freeing employers of their responsibilities.

It will do so by reducing risks. And it's a proven fact that prevention works when workers are truly involved.

With Bill 59, the government is playing Robin Hood in reverse... taking money from workers who are victims of accidents or illnesses and giving it to employers.

It is ob-scene.

Bill 59 must be rejected.

