



Legislative Assembly

JOHN YAKABUSKI, MPP Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke NEWS RELEASE

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Yakabuski Exposes Liberal Government's Disrespect for Our Dedicated RCMP and Armed Forces Personnel

(Toronto) John Yakabuski, MPP for Renfrew – Nipissing – Pembroke, received nothing in the way of a legitimate answer from the Liberal Government today in response to a question asked during Question Period.

He raised the issue regarding members of the Armed Forces and RCMP who are forced to pay Premier McGuinty's provincial health premium, even though their health care services are totally provided for by the Federal Government.

"Essentially, they are paying more and getting nothing," Yakabuski charged. "This is a situation that shouldn't have happened in the first place, and yet it has still taken the McGuinty Government two years to do nothing." The Canada Health Act specifically provides for members of the military and RCMP to be excluded from the definition of insured persons with respect to provincial health care. In Alberta and British Columbia, which also charge a provincial health premium, armed forces personnel and RCMP officers are exempt. However, the McGuinty Liberals' health premium, instituted in May 2004, did not exempt those personnel even though they will never access the services they are being forced to pay for.

Neither Health Minister Smitherman nor Premier McGuinty were present in the House today to respond and Acting Premier Phillips attempted, unconvincingly, to respond in their stead.

"The fact of the matter is, this situation is truly insulting to our dedicated members of the Armed Forces and RCMP, and the Government knows they cannot just explain away their inaction and ignorance on this issue. They need to remedy it, and immediately," Yakabuski said.

Yakabuski has attempted to bring this unfair tax to the Minister of Health's attention many times in the past, but the Government has given no indication of a response.

“Minister Phillips today responded by saying that it was ‘probably not a totally simple matter in terms of the solution’ and that ‘we’re looking into it,’” Yakabuski admonished after Question Period. “Well I say to him and his Government: Yes. It is simple. Don’t penalize our proud officers and military for their dedication to our country. Stop ‘looking into it’ and do something about it.”