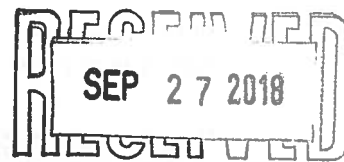


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**From:** Warren (Smokey) Thomas <opseucommunicationsdepartment@opseu.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 27, 2018 11:42 AM  
**To:** Roxanne St. Germain  
**Subject:** Ford turning Ontario into the "wild west of cannabis," and municipalities will pay the price



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- Building
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- Parks & Rec  S  C
- Planning  S  C
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SEPTEMBER 27, 2018

**Ford turning Ontario into the "wild west of cannabis," and municipalities will pay the price**

TORONTO - OPSEU President Warren (Smokey) Thomas said he is shocked that the Ford government wants to throw open the doors to cannabis profiteers and leave municipalities and communities to deal with the problems.

"Unlimited stores and unlimited places to smoke will cause unlimited problems," said Thomas. "It's outrageous. We're going to become the wild west of cannabis and Sheriff Doug Ford is going to skip town, leaving communities and municipalities holding the dime bag."

With no limits on the number of stores allowed in the province, Thomas said the legislation being introduced today will allow Ford to hand out licenses to all the corporate donors and Conservative insiders that he pleases.

"It's just what we predicted: a scheme to put public money into private pockets," said Thomas. "The premier has been railing all week about how badly the Liberals and their backers have ripped us all off. But now he's doing exactly the same thing, ripping off the people so his friends and backers can get rich."

"If Ontario's finances are truly as bad as Ford wants us to believe, why is he giving away the millions, maybe even billions, in revenue we'd get if cannabis sales were public?"

OPSEU First Vice-President / Treasurer Eduardo (Eddy) Almeida scoffed at the "support" Ford says he's offering to municipalities.

"Unlimited stores means that municipalities are going to be responsible for a significant amount of enforcement, and the pittance Ford is offering to help with that is laughable," said Almeida. "\$40 million to more than 400 municipalities? You don't have to be a math whiz to understand that's barely any support at all."

Thomas warned the premier that he'll find out just how unpopular this scheme is during the upcoming municipal elections.

"Ford says he's giving municipalities a voice by allowing them to opt out of having a private cannabis outlet within their borders," said Thomas. "But choosing between a private retailer and a black market retailer is really no choice at all. There needs to be a public option for municipalities who do the responsible thing for ratepayers and communities and opt out.

"Municipalities need to be able to choose public cannabis outlets," said Thomas. "The public plan works. It's time to just say no to Doug's."

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