

Ruling to end 'exploitation': Home daycare workers could be on par with workers in government centres [CA-QC] ^[1]

Author: Solym, Catherine

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EXCERPTS:

After 20 years working with other people's children, Michele Myner might finally be paid as an adult.

Following a landmark decision by the Quebec Labour Tribunal on Monday, she and 10,000 other home daycare workers could soon be unionized, doubling their salaries - and the government's bill.

The tribunal ruled that home daycare workers, starting with those at the Rose des Vents centre in Blainville, are employees of the government-funded Centre de la Petite Enfance and not independent workers.

As such, they are entitled to the same pay as other daycare workers, said Sylvie Tonnelier, president of the Federation des Intervenantes en Petite Enfance du Quebec, affiliated with the Centrale des Syndicats du Quebec.

"For years the government has saved so much money on the backs of women, who make up 99.9 per cent of this profession. Their exploitation has been shameful," Tonnelier said.

"This is an important decision to recognize a profession that's come out of the dark."

A study done by the FIPEQ showed that in 1999, following the government reform of daycare centres, home workers made an average \$4.63 an hour, compared with other daycare workers who made \$10.10.

The reform to standardize wages for 12,000 workers in Quebec's \$5-a-day centres cost the government about \$140 million, Tonnelier said. Their starting wage has since gone up to \$12.59.

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Region: Quebec ^[2]

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