



FALL 2014 COLLECTIONS  
MARCH 17-21  
DAVID PECAUT SQUARE, TORONTO



They've been framed!

Wednesday, March 12, 2014  
1:56 PM EDT

Sign In

# EDITORIALS

  
Search the archives

FREE SATURDAY STAR with a DIGITAL ACCESS SUBSCRIPTION

FIND OUT MORE >

- HOME
- NEWS
- YOUR TORONTO
- OPINION
  - Editorials
  - Commentary
  - Readers' Letters
  - Public Editor
  - Corrections
  - Editorial Cartoon
- SPORTS
- BUSINESS
- ENTERTAINMENT
- LIFE
- PHOTOS
- DIVERSIONS
- CLASSIFIEDS
- OBITUARIES

Opinion / Editorials

## Ontario must enforce equality rules for disabled: Editorial

Ontario's Liberal government must take action to prove that it will – finally – enforce its own equal access laws for the disabled.

[Tweet](#) 39
 [g+1](#) 4
 [reddit this!](#)
[+ save to mystar](#)



DAVID COOPER / TORONTO STAR [Order this photo](#)

Data collected by lawyer David Lepofsky, of the non-profit Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act Alliance, show that businesses in violation Ontario's accessibility law are not facing fines or compliance orders.

Published on Mon Nov 18 2013

Imagine a blind person with a guide dog is turned away from a store or restaurant. Not only is that refusal a sign of bad judgment, it's also a breach of Ontario's accessibility law.

Unfortunately, the 2005 legislation that promised equal access for the disabled within Ontario businesses has actually accomplished very little. And that should be an embarrassment for the provincial government.

After all, the Liberals got a moral boost by passing the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. But the reality is that the act is little more than whimsical window dressing because the vast majority of businesses don't comply with the basic rules. To make matters worse, the government has done nothing to enforce those rules. It's a sham.

As the Star's Laurie Monsebraaten reports, 70 per cent of Ontario's private businesses with 20 or more employees (about 360,000 across the province) have not bothered to comply with the law's most basic reporting requirements. That rule says businesses had to file an electronic report with the government by Dec. 31, 2012, detailing how they accommodate disabled customers, train staff and listen to feedback.

The time to take action is long overdue.

**EQUIFAX** Hurry! Limited-Time Offer

Get your **Free Equifax Credit Score and Report**

**Free 30 Day Trial**

Click to get your Free Score!

### Top News

- Updated** Explosion and building collapse reported in New York City
- Hydro One bill for \$233,692 prompts call for CEO to resign |
- Updated** Final words from cockpit of missing Malaysian flight revealed |
- Updated** Toronto weather LIVE: University, college classes cancelled |
- Updated** Chow resigns as MP, ready to join mayor's race Thursday |
- Did the Jays have a deal in place with Ervin Santana? |
- Updated** Prosecution recreates toilet in court to show Pistorius wasn't wearing his legs
- Missing OHL hockey player found dead in his truck |

### Inside thestar.com



Chow to resign as MP, launch Toronto mayoral bid Thursday



Why change the criteria for priority neighbourhoods?



Toronto's transit best in Canada, based on new ranking system



Travel Ireland: Family friendly fun keeps kids happy



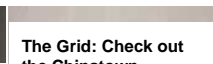
Take a bite of home show's extensive foodie offerings



Star Business Club: Four generations in the fur business



The Kit: How to dress like Hollywood's leading men



The Grid: Check out the Chinatown kitchen-supply store where Toronto's top chefs shop

The government should immediately tell the public, through a comprehensive plan, how it will finally enforce these hard-won rights. This plan must detail follow-up for inspections, compliance orders and fines. It is these requirements that give the law teeth and it's now clear that without proper enforcement, little improvement will be made.

The data analysis comes from lawyer David Lepofsky, of the non-profit Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act Alliance. According to Lepofsky's analysis, using government documents obtained through a freedom of information request, not one of the businesses in violation has faced a compliance order or fine. That's just wrong.

It's not **bad enough** that it took the Ministry of Economic Development 11 months to provide Lepofsky with the information he requested. Now, as he says, it turns out that the laws are largely irrelevant, and it's clear why the government did not want to produce the documents.

It's not going to harm businesses to answer questions, especially for such basic rules as accepting service dogs or training workers to interact with people of various disabilities.

And it's not too much to demand that the government fulfill its promise for equality – or just admit that it's doing nothing to help the disabled.

*and thoughtful discussion. Readers are encouraged to flag comments that fail to meet the our [Community Code of Conduct](#). For further information, including our legal guidelines, [visit Terms and Conditions](#).*

**n closed.**

Newest

#### day

ould the economic development minister be responsible for forcing business to comply with ability laws for customers? This is a consumer services ministry responsibility.<br><br>The ment is using this file for a single purpose - to profile Eric Hoskins - a little known Toronto MPP - tor who is now...Minister of economic development...and the guy who threw his support to at the last moment ensuring her spot at the top.<br><br>Blatant politicking.

#### system

ernment will continue to thumb its nose at the law. There is no respect for the law and is who have disabilities and their families, colleagues and friends who support them. This ment only pays lip service to the law. All it understands is having `conversations` not taking athleen Wynne should be ashamed of herself, her party and her predecessor. Shame on the ment for not enforcing the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Indeed, the time to take action is  
» more

#### onto

out those businesses that have no dealings with the public - whose customers do not visit or he place of business? It is a sad commentary that this government needed to legislate CY and common sense and then FAILED to do that properly.

#### todduls

The AODA also requires businesses to have accessibility policies in place for its employees and job applicants.



### Editorial Board

Meet the Star's editorial board |  
The Atkinson Principles

### The Star's Public Editor

The Star's Public Editor welcomes reader comments and complaints about news and feature content in the print and online editions.

About the Public Editor  
Recent Corrections  
Report an Error

### Most Popular

Happy 25th birthday Internet: A look back on the year the web was born |

Ontario professors should have to teach more courses, reports say |

Environment Canada braces for cuts to climate programs |

Missing OHL hockey player Terry Trafford found dead in his truck |

Neil Young makes sales pitch for the Pono, an iPod rival, at SXSW |

Toronto election: Olivia Chow resigns as MP to launch Toronto mayoral bid on Thursday |

Not just a hotdog on Bloor: Fiorito |

Prosecution recreates toilet in court to show Pistorius wasn't wearing his legs

These were the final words from the cockpit before Malaysia plane vanished |

Toronto's transit best in Canada, based on new ranking system |

[Advertise with AdWords](#)  
[google.com/AdWords](http://google.com/AdWords)  
 Set a Budget that Works for You. Learn More about Google AdWords.

---

[Hotel Deals in London](#)  
[expedia.com](http://expedia.com)  
 Find Great Deals on Hotels

---

**AODA, it's the law**  
[hrdownloads.com](http://hrdownloads.com)  
 Ontario Accessibility Standard, Workplace Compliance Check-list.

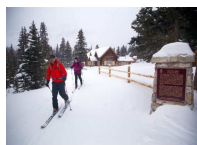
---

**GFI FaxMaker - Fax Server**  
[gfi.com](http://gfi.com)  
 Supports Internet-Based Fax Services. Paperless Faxing! Try Now



**Travel Survey**

Canadians' top moments of a trip



**Skoki Lodge**

The history of how it came to be



**Interest Rates**

Higher rates may affect your mortgage



**Passion Fruit**

Exotic scent, intense flavour



**Fare Deals**

Mexican resorts



**Retirement Plan**

Plan for retirement on a low income

**thestar.com**

- News
- Your Toronto
- Opinion
- Sports
- Business
- Entertainment
- Life
- Diversions
- Classifieds
- Site Map

- Wheels.ca
- Insurance Hotline
- New in Homes
- Star Store
- Blogs
- Contests
- Lottery Results
- Obituaries
- Corrections
- Public Editor
- Behavioural Targeting
- Today's News

**Toronto Star Newspapers Ltd.**

- About
- Atkinson Principles
- Statement of Principles
- Get Home Delivery
- Get Digital Access
- My Subscription
- Contact Us
- Contact Webmaster
- FAQ
- News Releases
- Star Internships
- Careers @ the Star

**Advertise with us**

- Advertising Terms
- Mediakit
- Online Advertising
- Print Advertising
- Special Sections
- Sponsored Sections

**Initiatives**

- Santa Claus Fund
- Fresh Air Fund
- Speakers Bureau
- Classroom Connection
- Pages of the Past

**Connect with Us**

- RSS feeds
- Twitter Updates
- News Alerts
- Newsletters
- Mobile Devices