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Top court won't hear disabled Nortel workers' case



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A group of disabled Nortel workers has faced another loss in the courts.

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled Thursday that it will not hear the group's appeal of a court-approved deal from November 2010 that saw workers lose their benefits at the end of last year.

Diane Urquhart, a financial analyst in Toronto who is working with a group of roughly 40 disabled Nortel workers, told CTV News today that the workers feel let down.

"Profusely disappointed and we believe that leaving the original ruling in place puts health and welfare insurance plans for over a million Canadians at risk."

However, Sue Kennedy of Ottawa who speaks on behalf of the majority of disabled Nortel workers said in a statement today: "I firmly believe that the allocation approved by Justice Morawetz in November 2010 is the most appropriate allocation."

She added that today's decision will allow for the final distribution of funds to disabled workers.

Urquhart charges the disabled are still being abused in this process and forced into poverty.

She said that four of the workers, including two from Ottawa, filed a complaint 10 days ago under the Ontario Consumer Protection Act charging that Nortel and Sun Life made false or misleading representation about the availability of disability benefits.

Urquhart says this is the first time such a complaint has been made and the Ontario government will have to decide if it's valid.

In addition, she says they'll continue to press the federal government to change the laws and provide more protection for pension and disability benefits in bankruptcy cases.

Sue Kennedy agrees: "I hope no other disabled employees in Canada have to go through this excruciating process."

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