Citation: Block, Richard N “Recent Reforms to Public Employee Interest Arbitration in Michigan: Any Lessons for Ontario?” (2013) 17:2 CLELJ 393

Abstract: In 2011, Michigan adjusted its interest arbitration scheme to address concerns that collective bargaining was imposing an unacceptably high price on public employers and taxpayers. The statutory amendments require arbitrators to compare the collective bargaining unit to non-arbitrated groups in the same jurisdiction, potentially resulting in a lower settlement than would otherwise have been awarded to the unit in question. The statute also requires the arbitrator to put more weight on the public employer’s ability to pay, thus tilting interest arbitration in favour of employers. The author suggests that, because of these amendments, Michigan provides a relevant case study for Ontario in an era of financial pressure.