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improving lives



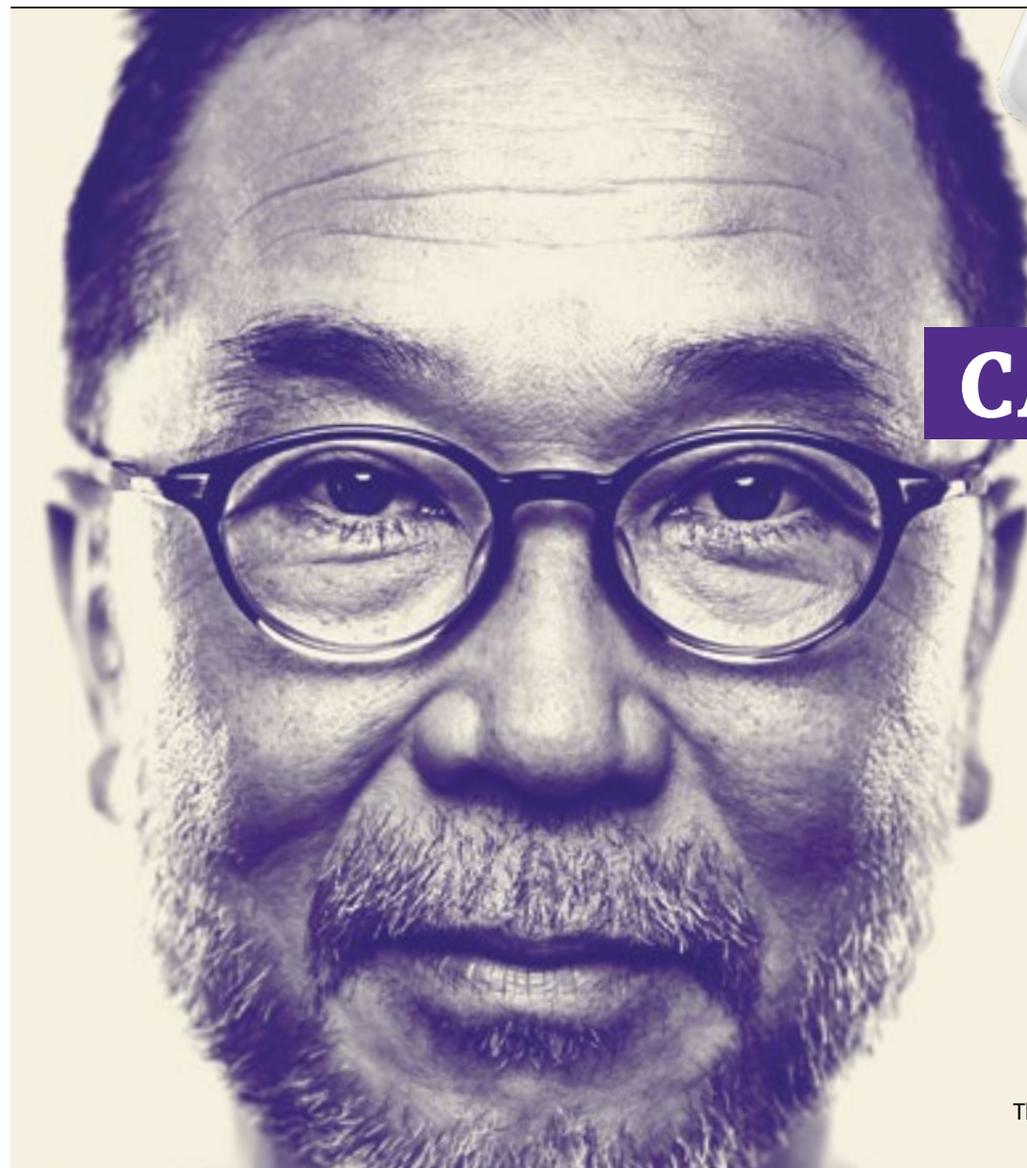
10 Unions celebrate three key
wins for Canadians

Labour Day 2017

A time to celebrate past accomplishments and focus on future gains for Canadian workers

A PEPPER MEDIA INITIATIVE IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS

Thursday, August 31, 2017



**3.5 MILLION
CANADIANS CAN'T
AFFORD THEIR
PRESCRIPTIONS**

**CANADA'S UNIONS
HAVE A PLAN.**

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Pharmacare: A plan for everyone.

Canada's unions are working to win a universal prescription drug plan that covers all Canadians regardless of income, age or where they live.

Learn more at aplanforeveryone.ca

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OPINION

Pharmacare: We need a plan for everyone



by Hassan Yussuff,
Canadian Labour Congress
President

There was a moment in Windsor, Ontario, years ago, that changed the way I look at prescription drug coverage forever. I was told about a worker who was hospitalized when his employer went bankrupt. Lying in his hospital bed, he was given notice that his health benefits would be terminated in 30 days. Just like that, he was plunged into a new insecure reality of being unable to afford the medications he needed. It's the same reality 3.5 million Canadians face today, thanks to our patchwork, ineffective prescription drug system.

In Canada today, an estimated 8.4 million working people do not have employer-based health benefits. That means many Canadians are splitting pills, skipping days to stretch their prescriptions, or not taking the medications they need at all, due to the unreasonable out-of-pocket costs.

Canada is the only developed country in the world with universal health care that does not include prescription drugs. Instead, our multi-payer system has resulted in the second-highest prescription drug costs in the world next to the United States. Working Canadians and their families feel the hit every single day.

Nobody should be forced to choose between paying for groceries and paying for their prescriptions. That's why Canada's unions are marking Labour Day with a campaign to win a universal drug plan for all Canadians.

Unions have worked for better health care for decades because it's an issue that affects all working people. Unions were there in the 1960s as Tommy Douglas established Medicare in Saskatchewan, and saw it expand to the rest of Canada. Ever since then, we've continued to push, not



A federal investment of \$1 billion a year will mean Canadians save \$7.3 billion a year on the medications they need, the Canadian Labour Congress says. ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

Canadians aren't benefiting from the current system. The only ones who do benefit are pharmaceutical companies, which can charge higher prices for commonly used drugs because they are selling to many buyers; and private insurance companies, which charge employers, unions and workers to administer private drug insurance plans.

just for better health insurance coverage for our members, but better public coverage for everyone.

Canadians aren't benefiting from the current system. The only ones who do benefit are pharmaceutical companies, which can charge higher prices for commonly used drugs because they are selling to many buyers; and private insurance companies, which charge employers, unions and workers to administer private drug insurance plans.

It just isn't working. Canadians working in part-time, low-wage, precarious jobs are less likely to have employer health benefits, which means young workers and women are less likely to be covered for prescription drugs. Even Canadians who do have coverage through work run into trouble because of ever-increasing co-payments and deductibles.

This should be unacceptable in a country like Canada. In our country, it's supposed to be simple – if you're sick, you should get treatment, regardless of where you live or how much you make. If you have a health card, you should have prescription drug coverage.

Many other countries have already got it right. Look at New Zealand, where a public authority negotiates drug prices on behalf of the entire country — 100 per

cent of their population is covered. There, a year's supply of the anti-cholesterol drug Lipitor costs just \$15 a year. In Canada, it costs \$811.

It's time for Canada to learn from other countries' successes and join the 21st century by combining our population's purchasing power under one plan. An annual investment of \$1 billion by the federal government will mean Canadians save \$7.3 billion a year on the medications they need.

Canadians already know this is the right move: a 2015 Angus Reid poll found that 91 per cent of Canadians believe our public health care system should include a universal prescription drug plan. Several national health care commissions have recommended the same, along with the Canadian Medical Association, Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, Canadian Doctors for Medicare, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and many more.

This Labour Day, Canada's unions are renewing our commitment to public health care by making pharmacare our top priority. We're bringing together local unions and workers with health care advocates in communities across the country to launch our pharmacare campaign. Join us, and together we can win a universal prescription drug plan for all Canadians, regardless of age, geography or income. ■

Pharmacare

A PLAN FOR EVERYONE

3.5 million Canadians can't afford to fill their prescriptions. Many are splitting their pills or skipping days to stretch the prescriptions they do fill.

Nobody should be forced to choose between paying for groceries and paying for the medication they need.

That's why we're working to win a universal prescription drug plan that covers all Canadians regardless of their income, age or where they live.

Join our call for a universal prescription drug plan at aplanforeveryone.ca



Canadian Labour Congress
Congrès du travail du Canada



Visit aplanforeveryone.ca to learn more.

HUMAN COSTS

Health care experts weigh in on the need for prescription drug coverage

Nurses, physicians and other health professionals have first-hand knowledge of the human cost of not having universal prescription drug coverage in Canada. Every day, they see the harm that comes from patients not being able to afford the medications they need.

The president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU), Linda Silas, remembers hearing from one nurse about a family that couldn't afford the inhalers their child needed for asthma. The nurse gave them samples to get them by until their next appointment, but making it to that appointment meant missing a day's pay, so the family didn't get more samples. The child's asthma got worse, resulting in a days-long stay in hospital.

"Lack of drug coverage hurts patients and it hurts the entire health care system," says Silas. "For this child, not being able to

afford inhalers costing approximately \$70 for three months' treatment led to a stay in hospital costing about \$1,000 a day."

This story is not unusual — one in 10 Canadians cannot afford to fill their prescriptions. "If you are a young worker, if you are a lower-income family, you are especially vulnerable," she says. "It shouldn't be this way. We are the only country with a universal public health care system that does not provide universal coverage for prescription medicines."

The CFNU and other national organizations, including the Canadian Labour Congress, are intensifying their calls for a national, universal prescription drug plan for all Canadians, to complete what is often called "the unfinished business of Medicare."

Our country's complex, patchwork system of prescription drug funding, with widely varying levels of public and private insurance coverage, means there

BY THE NUMBERS

The case for universal drug coverage

8.4 million

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF WORKING CANADIANS WHO HAVE NO PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

3.5 million

NUMBER OF CANADIANS WHO CANNOT AFFORD TO FILL THEIR PRESCRIPTIONS



AVERAGE COST OF THE CHOLESTEROL DRUG LIPITOR PER YEAR:

\$811

IN CANADA (which DOES NOT HAVE universal drug coverage)

\$15

IN NEW ZEALAND (which HAS universal drug coverage)

91 per cent

PROPORTION OF CANADIANS WHO BELIEVE OUR PUBLIC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM SHOULD INCLUDE A UNIVERSAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN*

* SOURCE: ANGUS REID SURVEY, 2015.

is uneven access to prescription drugs. Beyond the inequities, this system is inefficient and expensive; Canada has the second-highest prescription drug costs in the world after the United States.

"We need federal leadership to implement pharmacare, and we need action now," says the CFNU president. "With a universal plan, national bulk buying to lower drug prices and one evidence-based drug formulary for the whole country, we can save billions of dollars a year."

Numerous studies have put the economics in perspective, estimating that an annual investment of \$1 billion by the federal government will mean Canadians save \$7.3 billion a year on the medications they need.

Dr. Danyaal Raza is a family physician at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto and the board chair of Canadian Doctors for Medicare, another organization advocating for a universal prescription drug plan.

Dr. Raza points out that advances in prescription medications make it possible for people with chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes to live healthier lives. These benefits may be lost, he says, if people face difficult choices because of finances.

"When I prescribe a medication to treat diabetes and keep a patient's sugars under control, I shudder to think they may have to buy cheaper, less healthy food to afford what's been written on the prescription pad," Dr. Raza says. "What difference are we making in people's health if we are asking them to sacrifice food in order to afford medication?"

"It's not every day in public policy that we're presented with a program that includes more people and saves money at the same time," he adds. "The federal government needs to hear from individual Canadians, labour organizations, non-governmental organizations and private-sector employers that enough is enough — Medicare has been incomplete for decades, and prescription drugs have been a big missing piece." ■



Left: Dr. Danyaal Raza, board chair of Canadian Doctors for Medicare; Right: Linda Silas, president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions. SUPPLIED

**NEARLY ONE MILLION CANADIAN
HEALTH CARE WORKERS SUPPORT**

Pharmacare

A PLAN FOR EVERYONE

The missing
piece of our
Canadian
public health
care system.



CANADIAN FEDERATION
OF NURSES UNIONS
LA FÉDÉRATION CANADIENNE
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LABOUR MARKET TRENDS

Pharmacare essential for workers in low-wage, part-time jobs

Changes in Canada's labour market make the need for a universal prescription drug plan all the more crucial, say proponents of national pharmacare.

"We are seeing trends in the labour market that suggest that inequalities in access to prescription drug coverage and, therefore, inequalities in access to drugs themselves, are getting worse," says Dr. Steve Morgan, professor of health policy at the University of British Columbia.

Growing numbers of Canadians are stuck in precarious jobs, working for low wages, part-time, or as self-employed contractors. On top of income uncertainty, that also means being less likely to have prescription drug coverage.

About 8.4 million working Canadians do not have prescription drug coverage. That includes almost three-quarters of people who work part-time.

"That has a real impact on millennials coming into the labour market. Younger workers are very reliant on part-time jobs and jobs in smaller organizations that don't have benefits packages," says Dr. Morgan.

While fewer workers have access to drug coverage, the importance of prescription medicines to the health care system has also grown, says Dr. Morgan – noting dramatic advances in pharmaceutical therapies in recent decades.



“We are seeing trends in the labour market that suggest that inequalities in access to prescription drug coverage and, therefore, inequalities in access to drugs themselves, are getting worse.”

Steve Morgan,
Professor of health policy at the University of British Columbia



Prescription drugs are unaffordable for many Canadians working in precarious, low-wage and part-time jobs, with no employer drug coverage. ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

"It's a paradox. While medications have become more effective, we are less able to ensure everyone who needs them has access," he says.

The situation will only worsen without a national, universal prescription drug plan, Dr. Morgan predicts. "Because of the extraordinary and uncontrolled costs of medicines in Canada — we have some of

the highest costs in the world — businesses are saying they can no longer afford to provide the kinds of benefits they have in the past."

A government-run, single-payer system is the answer, he says, because only government can bring to bear the expertise and the buying power needed to keep prescription drug costs at a reasonable level. ■

PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE CHALLENGE OF AFFORDING PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

KERRI, MANITOBA

Kerri is a self-employed writer in her twenties who takes medications for asthma and ADHD.

“When I graduated from university, I lost coverage under my dad's employer group plan. Fortunately, Manitoba's Pharmacare program covers most of my medication expenses, but my deductible is only affordable at present because I live with my parents and have a lower income. I am young, working to grow my business and explore other employment endeavours, but the prospect of deductibles rising with my income causes significant apprehension about the financial burden of managing my health in a possible future without insurance.”

DIA, ONTARIO

Working for a small non-profit with no benefits plan, Dia needs several medications to control severe asthma.

“My story reflects the realities of today's labour market—with many workers in a revolving door of contracts and few employers offering group benefits. If you are chronically ill, you are often out of luck. I am getting a biologic drug through a clinical trial but when that ends, I have no idea where I will get up to \$36,000 a year for only one of my seven medications.”

BEN, NOVA SCOTIA

A recent high school graduate, Ben is saving with the goal of studying culinary arts at college. He was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at age one.

“My mother works two jobs, one of which she keeps because it provides drug coverage to finance some of the costs of my insulin, syringes, test strips and glucometer. If I enroll in college, I can remain covered by her plan until I'm 25 or just 21, if I'm not in school. I face a lot of uncertainty about the future. I want to work in the restaurant industry – a sector where employer health benefits are rare.”

Do you have a story about how lack of public universal prescription drug coverage has affected you?
Visit www.facesofpharmacare.ca

TRADE

A new NAFTA? Why you should care

U.S. President Donald Trump wants to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement – better known as NAFTA. But why should we care?

Journalist Linda McQuaig says there's a lot at stake.

"NAFTA actually weakens the position of workers, making them compete against American and Mexican workers who – particularly in the case of Mexicans – are paid much less and have fewer benefits than Canadian workers," she said.

McQuaig says the Canadian government has a responsibility to ensure any new NAFTA is explicit about protecting and strengthening workers' rights. Right now, the only mention of workers' rights is in a side deal that has been almost impossible to enforce. ■

SO WHAT SHOULD A NEW NAFTA LOOK LIKE?

A new NAFTA...

MUST PROTECT WORKERS' RIGHTS:

That means including explicit protections for workers in the main text of the deal and making sure Canada can, when necessary, enforce fair labour standards and wages and other workers' rights with trade sanctions.

CAN'T TRUMP CANADIAN LAWS AND REGULATIONS:

The old NAFTA circumvented Canada's courts with what's called "investor-state dispute mechanisms" allowing foreign companies and investors to sue provincial or federal governments if, for example, an environmental regulation got in the way of profits. That's left Canada the most frequently sued country under NAFTA. A new NAFTA must force foreign companies and investors

to use Canada's courts if they have an issue with Canada's laws or regulations.

NAFTA MUST PROTECT CANADIAN CULTURAL PRODUCTION AND CONTENT:

Donald Trump wants to change NAFTA to take away our right to protect and promote Canadian and French language cultural content and production. But cultural production can't be treated like a commodity - it is part of our identity. This is especially true in Quebec, where French content is forced to compete with an overwhelming influx of North-American English content. The new NAFTA cannot allow U.S. companies or the U.S. government itself to sue Canada or Quebec for protecting the French language or cultural production.

MUST PROTECT THE PUBLIC SERVICES CANADIANS RELY ON:

A new NAFTA must protect public services we rely on, like health care. It must also safeguard our governments' right to introduce new public services, such as a universal prescription drug plan for all Canadians.

MUST PROTECT LOCAL PRODUCERS AND FOOD SAFETY:

A new NAFTA must ensure Canadians maintain the access we have to safe, high-quality, locally produced food. A new deal must also safeguard our right to support local and small family farms and rural communities.



Working people
deserve better

FAIRNESS

A tale of two provinces: How Ontario and Alberta are improving workers' lives

The Ontario and Alberta governments are bringing outdated labour laws into the 21st century and enhancing protections for the growing number of workers in part-time, temporary and low-wage jobs.

Canada's unions are celebrating the changes as a great start, and say they hope other provinces will follow suit.

Ontario's Bill 148 raises the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2019, prevents pay discrimination against part-time and temporary workers, and proposes penalties for employers who change workers' schedules without adequate notice. It also introduces two paid emergency days for all workers and increases vacation entitlements to a minimum of three weeks.

The Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL)



Workers in Ontario and Alberta see higher minimum wages and expanded labour rights and benefits through provincial government reforms.

ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

hopes even more will be done to safeguard decent work for future generations.

"In Bill 148, the government has shown its commitment to updating laws that are far behind the times," said OFL president Chris Buckley. "We appreciate the steps the government has taken, but we encourage them to go further."

The OFL points out that too many workers are still exempt from certain legal protections, and it calls for fairer standards and unionization rights for every working Ontarian.

"Workers have a constitutional right to organize, engage in collective bargaining and strike. If the government is serious about fair workplaces and better jobs, it will also extend card-based certification to all workers in all workplaces," he says.

Under card-based certification, workers can apply for union certification after a required percentage sign a union card. Most workers in Ontario are required to use a vote-based system, where cards are signed and, one week later, a unionization vote is held. During that period, workers are vulnerable to employer influence to vote "no."

Alberta will move to a \$15 an hour minimum wage by 2018. And in Bill 17, it introduces labour law reforms that strengthen standards for workers and bring in a new "hybrid" union certification process. A union that has 65 per cent support from workers will be certified; if the support is less but still above 40 per cent, a vote will be held.

"We are happy the government acknowledges that the current system for union certification is flawed and tips the scale against workers who try to join a union," says Alberta Federation of Labour president Gil McGowan. "However, a more democratic model would be automatic card certification at a 50 per cent threshold."

The Alberta bill also guarantees job-protected leaves for workers who are sick, caring for a family member or fleeing domestic violence. ■

PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES ON LABOUR LAW REFORM

THE ALBERTA GOVERNMENT IS PROVIDING "DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE" – A NEW UNPAID, JOB-PROTECTED LEAVE UP TO 10 DAYS FOR EMPLOYEES ADDRESSING A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SITUATION.

“It’s critical that an employee dealing with abuse doesn’t have to fear losing their job if they ask for time off. Not all employers recognize that women leaving an abusive partner need time, for example, to sort out legal issues, find shelter and get counselling for themselves and their children.

Many more protections are needed — the dynamics of domestic violence affect all workplaces.”



JAN REIMER,

Executive Director, Alberta Council of Women's Shelters

ONTARIO'S UNIONS ARE PRESSING FOR REFORMS TO SUPPORT ALL WORKERS' RIGHTS TO JOIN A UNION, INCLUDING ELIMINATION OF TWO-STAGED CERTIFICATION.

“At our workplace, 60 per cent of employees signed union cards, but we had to wait for the official vote. During that week, we lost half our support because of employer intimidation and threats of discipline. We have appealed to the labour board, but if we had card certification,

with one stage, we would already have a union and a strong voice.”



ERNESTO J. ESPINOZA,

an Ontario worker organizing with Unite Here 75

THE ONTARIO GOVERNMENT WILL RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE IN THE PROVINCE TO \$15 AN HOUR BY 2019.

“A \$15 minimum wage will not afford me a life of luxury, but it will reduce the pressure on me to juggle multiple jobs, give me some much-needed breathing room and a bit more time to spend with my family. We have already waited far too long for government to end sub-poverty

wages. These changes can't come soon enough.”



ERENDIRA BRAVO,

a worker with first-hand experience in low-wage jobs, and organizer with the \$15 and Fairness campaign

ROLE OF UNIONS

Canada's unions fighting for members' rights and fairness for all workers

A workplace injury dealt Alin Muthi a serious setback in October 2013, and he has been trying to get his life back in balance ever since. He's doing it with the support of his union, the Teamsters.

On the dock of his employer, Muthi stepped from his forklift truck and was accidentally pinned against it by another vehicle. He was left with a fractured pelvis and back injuries. During close to three months of recovery, he received coverage from the Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB).

In January 2014, a WSIB physician concluded that Muthi could return to work

on modified duties in an administrative job.

"I was in chronic pain and I couldn't be at a desk for eight hours without strong medication," says Muthi. "The medication made me drowsy and dizzy, and one day I fainted."

His employer told him his conduct was unprofessional and his medication use at work violated company policy. Muthi was backed into a corner — he couldn't handle working without the medication, so had to take 11 months off without pay.

He turned to his local union representative, and now his case is going before a WSIB tribunal.

"I am very grateful to the Teamsters,"

says Muthi. "I don't know who else would have helped me. My union is standing up for me and has taken a real burden off my chest."

Coming to the aid of members in disputes with employers is one of unions' important roles, which go well beyond negotiating good contracts, says Teamsters Canada president François Laporte.

"We can represent workers in health and safety matters, and also ensure the day-to-day application of their collective agreement. Employers sometimes try to find loopholes in work contracts at the expense of workers. This is where we come in. We make sure our members' rights are respected," he says.

Teamsters Canada works to negotiate retirement plans and other benefits for members. It has a program for female members with cancer and recently launched a campaign on mental health in the workplace.

Unions are also strong advocates for continuous enhancements to labour laws, employment insurance, and workplace health and safety regulations, adds Laporte.

"A union is an agent for social change. It makes sure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect. Many changes in workers' rights legislation that we have seen over the past 100 years are the result of union battles." ■



TEAMSTERS CANADA

Being unionized means respect, justice, equality, fairness, dignity in the workplace and a better quality of life.

Curious about joining a union?

**Call to speak with an organizer,
or visit our website.**

1 866 888-6466

teamsters.ca/join



MILESTONES

Three victories that impact all Canadians

This Labour Day, Canada's unions will celebrate major victories won over the last year that will improve the day-to-day lives of all Canadians.

1) STRONGER PUBLIC PENSIONS FOR ALL WORKERS

Last November, our government passed legislation that strengthened the Canada Pension Plan, something that has been a priority for Canada's unions for decades. While most union members have pension plans at work, more than 60 per cent of working Canadians do not. The passage of Bill C-26 was the first expansion of the CPP in the plan's history, and unions lauded



the benefits for today's young workers in particular, who struggle to save at a time when good, secure jobs with private pension plans are so hard to come by.

2) A CANADIAN BAN ON ASBESTOS

On December 14, 2016, the federal government announced it was finally banning the import, export and use of asbestos — capping decades of advocacy for safer, healthier workplaces and public spaces. Canada's unions, survivors and health advocates have long worked to raise awareness about the terrible toll of asbestos exposure. An estimated 150,000 Canadians are exposed to asbestos at work, and every year, more than 2,000 Canadians die from asbestos-related diseases. Canada's

unions will continue to press for stronger regulations on asbestos disposal and remediation, and to urge governments to work with First Nations to address high levels of asbestos in on-reserve housing.

3) CRIMINAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR WORKPLACE DEATHS AND INJURIES

This year on April 27, the federal government announced its commitment to ensure enforcement of the Westray Law — a law that makes it possible to prosecute employers for negligence that puts workers at risk of death or serious injury. The announcement came just days before the 25th anniversary of the May 9, 1992, Westray Mine explosion that claimed the lives of 26 miners. The miners' families



and their union, the United Steelworkers, had won new Criminal Code provisions in 2004, but enforcement proved difficult. The federal government has now committed to working with the Canadian Labour Congress and its members, with employers, and with provincial and territorial partners to finally help ensure the Westray law is effectively enforced. ■

WHY CHILD CARE MATTERS

\$865 

NATIONAL AVERAGE MONTHLY CHILD CARE FEE ¹

32%

AMOUNT OF INCOME SINGLE PARENTS IN CANADA SPEND ON CHILD CARE ²

CHILD CARE. FOR ALL.

 **3X**

THE COSTS FOR CHILD CARE HAVE RISEN AT THREE TIMES THE RATE OF INFLATION ³

1 IN 4

LICENSED CHILD CARE IS AVAILABLE FOR ONLY 24% OF 0-5 YEAR OLDS ⁴



childcareforall.ca



¹ International Monetary Fund "Women are Key to Future Growth: Evidence from Canada"

² OECD "Babies and Bosses Report"

³ Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

⁴ Government of Canada's Child Care Spaces Initiative

A photograph of a young child with dark skin and curly hair, sleeping peacefully in a grey long-sleeved onesie. The child is lying on a light-colored, patterned blanket. A large, brown teddy bear with a white snout and a brown bow around its neck is positioned next to the child. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color.

Aren't they worth it?

Canadian families spend
almost one-quarter of
their income on child care.

Enough is enough.

We need affordable,
accessible, quality
child care for all.

childcareforall.ca



psacunion.ca

SEIU HEALTHCARE

My Union. My Community. My Voice.

On the surface, SEIU Healthcare is your typical union, representing more than 58,000 health care workers in Ontario. But if you look a little closer, it becomes clear that they're more than that; they're a community.

In 2015, SEIU Healthcare restructured their executive board, dedicating seats to ensuring equity in the workplace. These positions are occupied by representatives from specific communities: Aboriginal/Indigenous, LGBTQ, Persons with Disability, Retirees, Women, Workers of Colour and Young Workers.

"It was a trailblazing idea that I think not only other unions, but other organizations in general will look at using in the future," said Ainsworth Spence, who sits on SEIU Healthcare's executive board as the Workers of Colour representative.



SEIU Healthcare members take their passion to the streets during the 2016 Labour Day Parade in Toronto. SUPPLIED

By having a greater platform to advocate for the communities they represent, SEIU Healthcare's executive board members have been able to make a difference in their workplaces, with community-specific language being implemented into recent collective agreements, such as gender-neutral language being added into a recently negotiated agreement with a Toronto-based hospital.

They've also hosted many awareness-raising community events related specifically to the equity seats they occupy. The work they've accomplished has empowered others to get involved, further amplifying the voices of these communities.

"Traditionally, individuals who belong to these communities often feel excluded or intimidated because they don't see themselves represented in leadership positions," said Sebastian Trujillo, who sits on SEIU

Healthcare's executive board as the LGBTQ representative. "SEIU Healthcare has shown that community-specific issues, both inside and outside of the workplace, are extremely important and need to be addressed."

While it will always be the role of a union to upgrade the working conditions of its members, in today's society, these issues are just one part of the equation. Unions in the 21st century must continue to address social issues as well, including bringing equity to the workplace.

"As a member of SEIU Healthcare, no matter who you are, what you look like or what you believe in, you have a voice and the support of a community of more than 58,000 health care workers," said Spence. "It's empowering to know that when I am faced with an issue or fighting for a cause, I am not just Ainsworth; I am SEIU Healthcare." ■



YOU ARE HEALTHCARE

DEDICATED. COMPASSIONATE. PROFESSIONAL.

You are **SEIU** Healthcare

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SEIUHEALTHCARE.ca

YOUNG FAMILIES

Child-care gains are a source of pride for Canada's unions

Sara Langlois is a Vancouver teacher, her husband is an architect, and yet, when their second child is born in February, it will actually cost them money to both stay at work. They now pay \$1,500 a month for one daughter's child care, and having to pay \$3,000 a month for two would exceed Langlois' take-home pay.

Even so, they consider themselves lucky because they're happy with their child care at the YWCA.

"I don't know what other people do," she says. "Price is a problem, but it's also lack of spaces."

She knows single parents who've had to stop working because they couldn't afford child care and couples now working different shifts - one daytime; one nighttime - to avoid the expense. Langlois says they'll be using savings and asking their parents for help if they both keep working when their second child is born.

The situation is what Sharon Gregson describes as "child-care chaos." The spokeswoman for the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of B.C. hopes it'll soon be addressed there, thanks to the NDP government's promise for \$10-a-day child care.

The dilemma facing Langlois is the same for many parents across Canada, but advocates say there's hope. They haven't quite succeeded in their goal to secure high-quality universal child care for all, but they're making progress thanks to a federal government that has pledged new funding.

"We're really happy it's on the agenda," says Morna Ballantyne, executive director of the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada. "Canada's unions, working with child-care advocates and those involved in child-care service delivery, have been working hard, and there's no question it's on the agenda in a big way."

Ballantyne says that the 2017 federal budget's long-term funding commitment for child care was a significant step forward, but more money is needed and there's still much to do.

"It's a start," she says. "We'll be pushing

for significant funding increases over the next 10 years."

The Liberals campaigned on a promise to strike child-care agreements with all of the provinces and territories. The framework for those agreements was announced in June. So far, only Ontario has signed, but other agreements are imminent.

"We want to ensure the bilateral agreements allow for significant progress - making more care available, increasing its quality and making it more affordable and inclusive," Ballantyne says.

The B.C. government's commitment is to create a child-care program that costs parents \$10 a day. Households earning less than \$40,000 a year will get free child care.

"The good news is that we have a government committed to a comprehensive program, which would lower costs, substantially increase the number of spaces and increase pay for early childhood education workers," Gregson says. The new government also appointed a secretary of state responsible for child care, signalling it means business.



Access to affordable child care is expanding in Canada, with federal funding and provincial initiatives, and ongoing advocacy from Canada's unions. ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

"Our plan here made a difference," she says. "The Coalition, along with our partners—parents, grandparents, child-care providers, businesses, labour groups, concerned citizens — made this happen. We released our plan in 2011 and built support for it across the province so child care really

was one of the top three election issues." Meanwhile, Alberta's NDP government has launched a \$25-a-day public child-care pilot at 18 early-learning child-care centres. Premier Rachel Notley has said her government will add more \$25-a-day child-care services as finances permit. ■

BY THE NUMBERS

The growing cost and diminishing availability of child care in Canada



+8 per cent

FEEES FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE IN CANADA'S 28 LARGEST CITIES INCREASED AN AVERAGE OF OVER 8 PER CENT FROM 2014 TO 2016 - THREE TIMES FASTER THAN INFLATION



\$36,000/year

A MIDDLE-INCOME FAMILY IN TORONTO WITH AN INFANT AND A TODDLER WOULD PAY \$36,000 A YEAR FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE - MORE THAN THE COST OF UNIVERSITY TUITION



70 per cent

WAIT LISTS ARE A COMMON FEATURE OF CENTRE-BASED CARE - WITH ALMOST ALL CITIES SURVEYED REPORTING THAT AT LEAST 70 PER CENT OF CENTRES MAINTAIN A WAIT LIST

* SOURCE: A GROWING CONCERN: 2016 CHILD CARE FEES IN CANADA'S BIG CITIES, CANADIAN CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES



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— OSSTF/FEESO educational team



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Investing in Ontario's Nuclear Fleet Means Lower Costs and GHG Emissions, More Jobs and Better Energy Security



By **MEL HYATT**
President
Power Workers' Union

On August 8th, Montreal's *La Presse* newspaper, reported that Hydro-Québec and Ontario were finalizing a historic 20-year power exchange agreement. Ontario's Ministry of Energy subsequently issued a statement describing the report as inaccurate and incompatible with Ontario's core objectives.

Ontario's Energy Minister requires that future agreements with Quebec meet 3 principles. Any proposal must be cost effective and cost less than other supply options. It must include firm capacity that meets Ontario's resource requirements. Finally, it must validate the provinces' shared goal of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, particularly from domestic natural gas generation.

Under the 2017 Quebec offer, an expansion of last fall's 7-year energy exchange agreement, Hydro-Québec would sell 8 terawatt hours (TWh) per year to Ontario's Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) for 20 years. This is 4 times more electricity annually than Quebec provides to Ontario today, representing about 6% of our province's electricity consumption.

The 2016 deal provides 500 megawatts (MW) of surplus power annually at a fixed, above market price (average export price of 4.8 cents/kilowatt-hour (kWh)) when available from Quebec. The deal states that these imports are to reduce Ontario's GHG emissions

and reliance on natural gas generation. GHG reductions from the exchange are estimated to be relatively small at about a million tonnes a year. That's because today, Ontario rarely uses its existing natural gas generation and much of it is under long-term contracts. As Quebec's generation is limited in winter, Ontario is committed to supply 500 MW to Quebec at those times.

This 2016 arrangement is purported to save Ontario ratepayers \$70 million over the 7-year agreement. In the winter, Quebec will effectively store the 500 MW and sell it back to Ontario in summer instead of Ontarians paying U.S. states to accept our province's electricity surplus.

Under the latest offer, Ontario would pay the Quebec Crown Corporation significantly more - 6.12 cents per kWh plus an annual increase of 2% in the sale price over the 20 years. Effectively, Quebec would store more of Ontario's surplus, importing it "free of charge" and then selling it back to Ontario when needed and available.

The 8 TWh proposal would not supply secure baseload electricity, nor could it compete on price with Ontario's low-cost, GHG-free, nuclear and hydroelectric production. Ontario already has one of the lowest-cost, lowest-GHG emission electricity systems in the world.

Fortunately, Ontario has already made smart, "good-for-the-province" decisions by securing the low-cost, low-carbon nuclear baseload generation that will help reliably power the province's economy for decades to come.

In the fall of 2015, the Ontario government announced an agreement with Bruce Power to refurbish the 8-unit station. This secured 6,300 MW of low-cost, low-carbon, 24/7 electricity to the 2060s. The agreement also supports tens of thousands of good, existing Ontario jobs, while creating tens of thousands of new ones.

In December 2015, Ontario committed to the continued operation of two

Ontario Power Generation (OPG) Pickering Nuclear units to the end of 2022 and four units to the end of 2024. Pickering produces 3,100 MW of safe, low-cost, low-carbon electricity. A 2017 study by Strapolec, an independent energy market analyst, concluded the extended operations would avoid 18 million tonnes of GHG emissions, sustain 40,000 person years of employment, save electricity customers over \$600 million, and curtail spending billions of ratepayers' dollars for out-of-province energy imports.

Ontario announced the refurbishment of the 4-unit Darlington Nuclear Station in early 2016 securing 3,500 MWs of low-cost, low-carbon electricity to 2055.

Station refurbishment sustains more than 2,000 operations and maintenance jobs and creates over 5,000 additional construction jobs to 2025. The 180 plus nuclear supply chain companies located in communities across the province are also major beneficiaries.

Electricity trading between Ontario and Quebec has been a long-standing practice and when well-structured, can be mutually beneficial. Going forward, Ontario's key challenge remains negotiating arrangements that best support our province's electricity consumers and economy while achieving real reductions in GHGs. Ontario's nuclear workhorse does just that.

Ontario's Nuclear Workhorse Delivers Benefits Today and Tomorrow

Extending the safe operations of the Pickering Nuclear Station to 2024 and refurbishing the Darlington and Bruce Nuclear Stations are smart, "good-for-Ontario" decisions.

Ontarians benefit in many ways:

- Abundant, affordable and reliable, low-carbon electricity 24/7 for decades to come
- Lower greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
- Tens of thousands of existing and new jobs
- A vibrant, successful, world-leading, multi-billion dollar a year nuclear industry
- Tens of millions of dollars to fund world-leading Research and Development at Ontario colleges, universities, hospitals and laboratories
- Production of valuable isotopes crucial for medical imaging
- Energy security that is not dependent on energy imports
- Exports of low-carbon electricity and high value products and services that reduce GHG emissions beyond Ontario

Ontario's nuclear advantage is a low-carbon energy workhorse in Ontario's economy.

For more information please go to www.pwu.ca

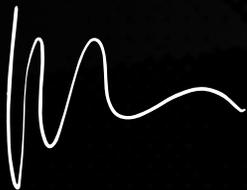
FROM THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HELP KEEP THE LIGHTS ON.



Donald Trump has failed the test of moral leadership, but we must not.

“Every local, regional and national labour leader, political leader, business and community leader has a responsibility to ensure that today’s fascists are denied the support they need to survive. We must all commit to challenging the racism that is still too prevalent in our homes, workplaces and communities. And we must all publicly and unconditionally condemn fascism, and those who refuse to condemn it.

Because what happened in Charlottesville can happen anywhere.”



**Hassan Yussuff
President of the Canadian Labour Congress**



Canadian Labour Congress
Congrès du travail du Canada