



BETTER PENSIONS – A MORE **SECURE** FUTURE

Securing a better future: It's time to fix Canada's pension crisis

Millions of Canadians are facing an uncertain future in retirement

All of us should have the right to a secure income in our retirement years. But:

- 11 million Canadian workers have no workplace pension plan;
- Only one-in-five employed in the private sector belong to a workplace pension plan;
- Most Canadians aren't able to save enough to cover basic retirement expenses;
- Existing pension plans are under added stress because of the global economic meltdown, while employers are shirking their responsibility to ensure workers have decent retirement incomes.

RSPs are not enough

The RSP retirement savings model is struggling because too few Canadians – about 25 per cent of tax filers – are able to afford contributions. And the global meltdown has exposed individual RSP investors to extreme risk and significant financial loss.

We can fix Canada's pension crisis

We can start to fix the crisis through a balanced approach that combines strong workplace pensions with public pension plans that cover all working people.

We can strengthen the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) with a phased-in doubling of benefits to a maximum of about \$23,000 a year. This

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BETTER PENSIONS, A MORE SECURE FUTURE: WHAT CUPE IS DOING

Together with the Canadian Labour Congress, CUPE has a long-range campaign to encourage our activists to take up the fight to win important changes.

- Go to cupe.ca/pensions to find out more and to sign the petition for better pensions;
- Fill out a postcard to Prime Minister Harper available at a pension event;
- Urge your CUPE local to formally endorse the pension campaign;
- Talk to friends, family and leaders in your community about the need for change.

would offer secure and enhanced pension benefits for the 93 per cent of Canadians who make CPP contributions.

The CPP is extremely efficient – management and administrative fees are a fraction of those charged by mutual fund companies. Expanding benefits can be achieved with a very small contribution increase for workers and employers.

And we must raise the guaranteed income supplement (GIS) to lift hundreds of thousands of poor pensioners out of poverty.

Tougher laws to protect pension plans needed

We need better regulations to protect existing workplace pension plans from bankruptcy, high-risk investments and employer under-funding. Workers – like those at Nortel – should never again have to pay for employer bankruptcies with their pensions.

Our pensions under attack

Unions have a proud tradition advocating for decent pensions for members and all Canadians.

But those who oppose decent retirement incomes go to great lengths to misrepresent public sector workers' pension plans. Public sector workers make significant contributions to pay for future pension benefits. An average pension for a 30-year employee would be a modest \$17,900 a year.

Most CUPE members don't have 30 years of service—and 30 per cent of CUPE members aren't even part of a pension plan.

As part of our pension campaign, CUPE is strengthening our bargaining strategy to protect pensions for members that have good pension arrangements and boost our efforts to win decent retirement incomes for those members who don't.