

October 2016

TO ALL CUPE CHARTERED ORGANIZATIONS

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

Fifty-eight members of CUPE Local 2974 at the Essex County Library in Ontario have been on strike since June 25, 2016. The majority of these CUPE members are women who work part-time with limited sick time and benefits. This strike is over major concession demands by the employer including cutting the sick time plan by more than half, even though sick time is not an issue at the libraries, the new plan will not have any savings and will cost more to administer. This is an attempt to erode sick time plans for all of Essex County workers.

Despite the best efforts of the bargaining committee, along with assistance from the Ministry of Labour mediators, they have been unable to reach a settlement. The bargaining committee has countered the employer's proposal of sick days and short term disability on 10 different occasions. The Union has done what they could to deal with the employer's concerns. Although the employer continues to say that the changes will result in zero savings and the employer won't start to see any savings for 30 years.

As the strike enters the 100-day mark, the strikers remain united and determined to fight off the employer and the funder's concession demands. The local continues to receive strong support from the community. The members remain active and engaged with the community and the media, including attending all council and library board meetings, door knocking in the community, attending community events to ensure their voices and concerns are heard and remain top of mind for the residents and the local media. Rotating picket lines at all the 14 branches and headquarters of Essex County Library will continue and the strikers remain determined to achieve a fair deal.

We are appealing to CUPE locals across the country to make financial contributions to support the CUPE Local 2974 Essex County Library strikers. Financial support can be sent to Local 2974 c/o The CUPE Windsor Area Office at 3200 Deziel Drive, Unit 414, Windsor, Ontario, N8W 5K8.

In solidarity,



MARK HANCOCK
National President

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c.c.: G. Hewitt; J. Matasic; S. Hawkins



CHARLES FLEURY
National Secretary-Treasurer