

CUPE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

March 2017

Our National Executive Board met March 21-23, 2017 in Ottawa. These are the highlights of their deliberations and decisions.

In Memory

The National Executive Board (NEB) observed a minute of silence to reflect upon the loss of members in our CUPE family. The following sisters and brothers were remembered: Daphne Sandoval, Local 966; Michel Patterson, Local 831; Gabe Kukuric, Local 5191; Kathy Schmidt, Local 7575; Lisa Balanowski, Local 3166; Bob Thompson, Local 1022; Wayne Harland, Local 500; Ryan Thomas Grey, Local 2800; Don Slobinyk, Local 30; Ben Melong, Local 30; Michael Lanier, Local 1936; Bill Dobbyn, Local 459; Brenda Coombs, Local 15; Doug Kingston, retired, Local 1252; Véronique Dubé, staff; James Dowell, retired staff; Margaret Joan Smith, retired staff; Suzanne Beaudry, retired staff; and Bob White, former President, Canadian Labour Congress.

2017 National Convention

Advance notice for CUPE's 2017 National Convention is being sent to chartered bodies in early April; it will also be available on our website. This package includes information about the National Convention and Events Assistance Fund (deadline for application is June 9); submitting resolutions (the deadline is July 4); and calls for nomination for various awards (deadline for nomination is July 4). Travel and accommodation information is also included.

The NEB also appointed Sisters Nan McFadgen, Candace Rennick, and Marle Roberts to a sub-committee that will review applications to the National Convention Assistance Fund and make recommendations to the NEB at its June meeting.

NEB Resolution – Diversity Vice-Presidents

Based on a report and recommendations from the NEB Sub-Committee on Diversity Seats, the NEB passed a motion to submit a constitutional amendment to the 2017 National Convention that will create four additional Diversity Vice-President positions on the NEB, representing LGBTTI workers, workers with disabilities, women, and young workers. The resolution will also attempt to preserve the existing regional balance on the NEB by limiting the number of DVPs from a province.

Should the constitutional amendment be adopted at convention, these new positions will be elected for the first time at our 2019 National Convention.

Federal Budget

The federal budget was presented in the House of Commons on March 22, and our Senior Economist joined the NEB the next day to discuss the budget.

Budget 2017 was an opportunity for the federal government to make significant and immediate strides on Canadians' priorities like child care, health care, and pay equity. Instead, Trudeau's budget was heavy on rhetoric, and light on action.

They failed to deliver on promises to close tax loopholes that benefit the wealthy, which would have given them more revenue to play with. Instead, there is very little increase in overall spending.

Much of the new spending is positive, including increased support for Indigenous communities, a commitment on housing and homelessness, and a modest amount for child care and early learning. But it falls far short of what is needed. And a considerable amount of infrastructure investment is expected to be made through the new Canadian Infrastructure Bank, using P3 models that will lead to privatization, higher costs, and user fees.

For the first time, the government included a gender budget analysis. This is a positive step forward, but a hollow one given the lack of investment in things like pay equity, a national child care program, or even a federal minimum wage.

Strike Support

Members of the NEB joined members of CUPE Local 2073 for a picket line rally on March 23 outside the Ottawa offices of the Canadian Hearing Society – Ontario. Two hundred and twenty-seven members at 20 offices across the province have been on strike since March 6.

Humanitarian Support

The NEB supported a donation of \$10,000 to four New Brunswick food banks that service the communities hardest hit by devastating ice storms. Thousands of homes in the region were without power for several days in January. In some communities, it took 12 days before power was fully restored.

Financial Support

The NEB approved 27 cost-shared campaign requests totaling \$7,774,748.14, and 13 requests for legal support totaling \$450,642.74.