

February 12, 2010

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons, 80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Harper:

**RE: Federal government's Supreme Court Appeal to close Insite,
Vancouver's supervised injection site**

The 600,000 members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) urge you and your government not to pursue the closure of Insite, Vancouver's supervised injection site, by appealing to the Supreme Court of Canada. The workers at Insite are represented by CUPE Local 1004 and they are proud to work at the first safe injection site in North America.

There is a wealth of scientific evidence that proves that safe drug injection sites, such as Insite, result in positive outcomes including saving lives due to drug overdose, decreasing the spread of AIDS by providing clients with clean syringes, and improving the health outcomes of people with addictions. At Insite, nurses are available to respond to overdoses, even though no-one has ever died from an overdose at the facility. Addictions counselors and support workers connect clients with housing and addictions treatment resources. This is important work that must be allowed to continue.

We believe that Insite must remain open because it provides a much needed medical service to a vulnerable client population. The courts have already ruled twice in favour of Insite. Your government's decision to now take the issue to the Supreme Court of Canada is an insult to the workers and to those people who rely daily on Insite's much needed programs and services. It is also not a very effective use of taxpayers' money.

Again Prime Minister, we urge you and your government to accept the rulings of both the British Columbia Supreme Court and the British Columbia Court of Appeal and allow Insite to continue to do the important work of saving the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

Yours truly,

PAUL MOIST
National President

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