

# **CUPE** NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

## **SEPTEMBER 2024**

Our National Executive Board (NEB) met in Ottawa September 17-19, 2024. These are the highlights of their deliberations and decisions.

### **In Memory**

The NEB observed a minute of silence to reflect upon the loss of members of our CUPE family. Remembered were: Ronald “Cam” Lawton, CUPE 4222; Dumitrel Tofan, CUPE 7800; Sara Sarabosing, CUPE 561; Jean Poole, CUPE 2087; Ron Johnson, CUPE 416 retiree; Craig Hannah, CUPE 1975; Pat Thast, CUPE 748; Dana-Lynn Raïche, CUPE 3383; Orval Turcotte, retired staff; Albéric Mbayahaga, retired staff; Gilles Martin, retired staff; and Richard Deaton, retired staff.

### **National Day for Truth and Reconciliation**

In recognition of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, the NEB participated in a smudge ceremony and teaching led by NIC Elder Thomas Louttit.

### **New Regional Vice-President**

Following the appointment of Gina McKay as the new General Vice-President representing the Prairies (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), Carmen Prefontaine was elected as the Regional Vice-President representing Manitoba. Carmen was welcomed to the NEB.

### **Financial Support**

The NEB approved 30 cost-share campaign requests totaling \$1,847,581.96, three requests for legal and arbitration support totaling \$131,178.78, and one request for legal support through the strike fund, to support legal costs for the Bill 13 constitutional dispute in Quebec.

### **National Disaster Relief Fund**

The NEB passed a motion to contribute \$100,000 to its recently reestablished National Disaster Relief Fund, to support Canadian communities recently affected by wildfires and other natural disasters. The town of Jasper experienced significant damage to wildfires in July following the evacuation of its residents. Wildfires and other natural

disasters have also had devastating impacts on other communities throughout the country and the NEB extends their sincere thoughts and solidarity to all who have been affected.

## **National Strike Fund Regulations**

The NEB received the report of the National Executive Board Sub-Committee on the National Strike Fund Review. The sub-committee assesses the National Strike Fund Regulations approximately every two years. The following recommendations of the sub-committee were approved by the NEB:

- 1) Increase weekly strike pay to \$350 for weeks one through five; to \$375 from week six through 11; to \$400 from week 12 through 15; and to \$450 from week 16 forward; (This also represents a shift in when strike pay first goes up, moving to the next tier of strike pay at week six now instead of week eight.)
- 2) Require an interim reconciliation of strike pay and forms submission for long disputes, at the four-month mark, and every four months thereafter;
- 3) Develop an electronic system for strike forms and for signing in on picket lines;
- 4) Update the National Strike Funds Regulations and forms accordingly.

## **Donation to CUPE 2614 Locked Out Workers**

The NEB approved a motion to donate \$100,000 to CUPE 2614, whose members have been locked out by the Port of Quebec, since September 15, 2022. For over two years, the members of CUPE 2614 have held strong in their fight for work-life balance, resisting an employer that wants to impose workweeks of 76 hours or more. Despite the ongoing lockout and until the new federal anti-scab legislation takes effect, operations at the port continue as usual as the employer is relying on scab labour. With no effective work stoppage, there is little incentive for the employer to negotiate in good faith. Please consider making a donation to the members of CUPE 2614. The link to send a solidarity message and information to donate can be found [here](#).

## **National Executive Board Policy on Collective Bargaining: Resisting Concessions and Two-Tier Proposals, and Defending Free Collective Bargaining – Moving Forward**

Revisions to the National Executive Board Policy on Collective Bargaining were adopted by the NEB. Last updated in 2016, the revised policy will continue to guide locals to develop a strategic bargaining plan which will include resisting concessions and two-tier contract provisions and defend our right to free collective bargaining. The amended policy will be rolled out across the country in the coming months.

## **Housing Policy**

The NEB adopted a policy statement, Housing in a time of Crisis, which strengthens and renews CUPE's position on housing. It recognizes the lack of affordable housing for our members and all workers with costs skyrocketing, rampant renoventions and unaffordable mortgage rates. CUPE recognizes that treating housing as a profit generating commodity, rather than a human right, is at the root cause of the housing crisis.

Through this policy, CUPE demands the integration of a right to housing framework into all public funding and policy on housing. CUPE also recommends that public money and public lands must be used for the public interest and protected from private profit. The plan calls for strengthening regulations for large-scale real-estate investors including real estate investment trusts and pension funds. CUPE commits to continuing its support for tenant movements and housing advocates and work against the racist and anti-immigrant message around the housing crisis.

## **Federal Election Strategy**

In preparation for what will be a high stakes federal election, the NEB adopted a robust strategy that aims to mobilize CUPE members all across the country. This plan ensures our members receive the tools and support they need to elect a progressive government. A series of webinars, guides, factsheets and more will be available in late 2024 and early 2025. Check [CUPE votes | Canadian Union of Public Employees](#) for frequent updates and the roll out of new materials.