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NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT MARCH 2022 – JUNE 2022

Sisters, Brothers, and Friends:

Since my last report in March, CUPE members across the country have continued to rise to the challenges as we slowly recover from the global pandemic and the impact it has had on our communities, our workplaces, and our union.

Our membership continues to grow, even though not all of our members have returned to work following pandemic-related layoffs, which is especially evident in our airline sector. Clearly one of the impacts of the pandemic is that workers have become less complacent, and many have chosen to join a union.

For many reasons, we are facing soaring inflation, at levels we have not seen in decades. Across the country, workers are struggling to make ends meet. Our members are no different.

Employers and governments are looking to force austerity measures, during bargaining and budget time. Now, more than ever, we need to demand and achieve real wage increases for our members who have risked so much over the past two years, as they worked on the frontline to keep our communities afloat. And we know that securing good agreements, with real wage increases, will make a positive difference for our members' purchasing power.

We have the resources we need to negotiate good collective agreements, including a robust and supportive bargaining policy, a healthy strike fund, and talented and committed staff and leaders at every level of our union.

We need to coordinate our efforts not only within CUPE but with other unions, both public and private sector – whether we negotiate with the same employer, in the same sector, or just in the same community.

As Canada's largest union, we have a responsibility to show leadership, and we do it every day in so many ways. Together, we can play a key role in ensuring our union, our workplaces, and our communities are better, for everyone.

MARK HANCOCK

National President/Président national

CANDACE RENNICK

National Secretary-Treasurer/Secrétaire-trésorière nationale

PATRICK GLOUTNEY, FRED HAHN, JUDY HENLEY, SHERRY HILLIER, LEE-ANN KALEN

General Vice-Presidents/Vice-présidences générales

Canadian Labour Congress

It was just over a year ago that CUPE participated in the virtual convention of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). At that convention, we helped elect new leaders for the Congress and establish a stronger and more worker-focused agenda. Since then, I have worked closely with CLC President Bea Bruske and the other officers on several key files including last year's federal election, government relations, and international matters.

The CLC is also bringing affiliated unions together for important discussions on organizing, focused on early dispute resolution between unions and a collaborative approach to organizing the hundreds of thousands of workers in this country who do not already have a union. Part of this conversation involves a plan to prevent the growth of some organizations, like the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) and the National Organized Workers Union (NOWU), who focus on raiding members from other unions and then negotiate inferior contracts that undermine our existing collective agreements.

The next CLC convention is less than a year away. It will be held in Montreal from May 8 – 12, 2023. All CUPE locals are affiliated to the CLC directly through the national union, and as you begin to plan your schedules and budgets for next year I encourage you to plan to participate by sending delegates to this important convention.

Federation of Canadian Municipalities

CUPE participated in the annual Federation of Canadian Municipalities conference in Regina in June. At the trade show, we had hundreds of conversations with local government officials from across the country, focused on the work our members do in their communities, the challenges of the funding gap for local infrastructure, and the risks associated with privatization, public-private partnerships, and private sector consultants who promote them.

We also hosted a well-attended workshop about the role strong public services can play in ensuring our communities are more equitable, and highlighting the negative impact underfunding or cutting public services such as transit, health, recreation, libraries, and even basic infrastructure can have on vulnerable and marginalized residents.

Division Conventions

Spring is always division convention season for CUPE and it was great to participate in these events across the country, whether they were held virtually or in person. While each convention is somewhat different, there is no question that we are facing similar challenges across the country. As always, I was impressed by our members'

participation in deliberations and debate. And I congratulate our newly elected provincial leaders.

National Sector Council Conference

CUPE's Sector Council Conference will be held in Ottawa this fall, from October 3 – 6. This will be our first national in-person event since the pandemic, and an important opportunity for our local leaders and activists to share information and strategies as we move beyond the pandemic and face the challenges ahead, together. I hope to see you there!

National Committees

CUPE's 18 national committees have begun their work, holding their first meetings virtually. I look forward to seeing our committee members in Vancouver in November when we pull them all together for an in-person All Committees Meeting.

Collective Bargaining/Strikes/Lockouts

PROVINCE	LOCAL	EMPLOYER	# OF MEMBERS	STRIKE BEGAN	DURATION (days)
Quebec	5454	Société Québécoise du Cannabis	300	May 20, 2022	Ongoing
Quebec	3939	Casino de Montréal	545	May 21, 2022	Ongoing

Strikes and Lockouts

CUPE 5454

CUPE 5454, representing employees of the Société Québécoise du Cannabis (SQDC), has been on strike since May 17.

As part of their negotiations to renew their collective agreement, the 300 members are demanding working conditions and wages similar to those offered in other comparable crown corporations, such as the Société des alcools du Québec.

Currently, sales representatives are paid \$17/hour when they are hired. Yet these striking members are responsible for informing and educating consumers on how to minimize the impact of cannabis on their health, which is the official mandate of the SQDC, and their remuneration should reflect this.

Job precarity is another important issue on the table, as 60% of the positions at the SQDC are casual, with unstable schedules and unpredictable income.

CUPE 3939

The contract for the 545 croupiers represented by CUPE 3939 expired on March 31, 2020. After spending much of the pandemic without work, they recently returned to the bargaining table, only to reach an impasse on a key question of workplace health and safety.

The union is demanding that work schedules allow for adequate recovery time, which prompted the strikers' theme "Misez sur notre santé" (Bet on health!). Some 55% of Casino de Montréal croupiers have sustained some form of musculoskeletal injury since the start of their careers, particularly tendinitis.

These workers have been on strike since May 21, 2022.

Collective Bargaining

Negotiations between municipal workers represented by CUPE 2099 and the City of Mount Pearl have reached an impasse, and the union filed a request on May 13, 2022 for the assistance of a conciliation officer with the Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Board. The employer is demanding concessions, attacking their benefits and offering very little in the form of wages. The members of CUPE 2099 are holding strong in their fight against concessions. The current collective agreement is set to expire on June 30, 2022.

The Ontario School Boards Council of Unions (OSBCU), on behalf of 55,000 frontline education workers served notice to bargain with the Ontario government and Council of Trustees' Associations. Notice to bargain centrally also serves as notice to bargain locally with 63 English and French-language public and Catholic school boards.

The past decade has seen education workers' wages fall substantially below inflation, in large part because of legislative interference with free collective bargaining. Twice in recent years, consecutive provincial governments have passed bills that either froze wages (the Liberals' Bill 115) or restricts wage improvements (Bill 124 under the Conservatives) for public sector workers.

The OSBCU continues to coordinate bargaining and mobilize locals and their members in preparation for what we expect will be a very difficult round of bargaining.

CUPE 1760, representing 120 workers at United Way British Columbia, recently reached an agreement to increase extended health coverage to a combined maximum of \$1,200 per year per person for accessing psychologists (including clinical

psychologists), registered clinical counsellors, social workers, and online cognitive behavioural therapists. This agreement was reached outside of the collective bargaining process, which is currently paused, but the proposal to increase coverage originated from a union bargaining proposal. This change is effective now, rather than waiting for the completion of collective bargaining.

CUPE 1760 also achieved the conversion of 12 temporary positions to permanent jobs, giving these workers not only job security but stronger seniority rights and full access to vacation, sick leave, and extended health and pension benefits.

Regional Updates

Maritimes Region

New Brunswick

CUPE New Brunswick held a virtual convention again this year, which took place April 1-2. The convention was broadcast from Moncton, with the division executive gathered in person and delegates joining virtually from across the province. I was glad to be able to participate from Moncton and see members unanimously recommit to fighting for the objectives of the “Bargaining Forward” campaign. The fight for wage increases higher than the cost of living has never been more important.

A month and a half later, I was back in New Brunswick for an in-person event. I was happy to join members of the New Brunswick Council of Nursing Home Unions as they planned for the fight ahead: they are entering a new round of bargaining, and are coordinating their efforts and mobilizing members to resist concessions and make real improvements to their working conditions, including a real and substantial wage increase. We know that the Higgs government wants to attack their pensions and the Council, which represents over 4,600 nursing home workers, will not let that happen.

The province is deliberately underfunding the defined benefit pension plan and breaking its legal obligations to ensure the plan’s viability. The government has ignored multiple calls by workers to adjust contribution levels. The plan deficit has now reached \$112 million. The law is clear though: the pension plan must be fully funded, or on the path to being fully funded, so that promised benefits are available to plan members. Government can’t contribute less than the cost of what is being promised to nursing home workers, and they can’t ignore plan deficits or allow them to grow.

CUPE has initiated legal proceedings to enforce pension laws and protect nursing home workers’ pensions.

The Higgs government presented a surplus budget this spring, but continues to offer nothing but austerity. CUPE NB noted the lack of imagination and big vision shown in this recent budget. As we emerge from the pandemic, New Brunswickers would greatly

benefit from innovative ideas such as a full network of 24/7 public health clinics for non-urgent care, public daycare centres in public workspaces such as schools, universities, and hospitals, electrification of the school bus fleet, and affordable public housing in rural areas. CUPE NB also proposed that government create a real immigration department to structure, improve, and better coordinate support for newcomers.

On the organizing front in New Brunswick, we have recently seen an increase in contract flipping in health care security services. Health authorities are awarding short term contracts to service providers, and then changing providers before we even get a chance to bargain a fair first agreement. Our members are laid off and then rehired by the new employer, which means we have to either re-organize or fight for successor rights at the Labour Board, which is not always successful. We are developing a variety of strategies to tackle this problem.

Prince Edward Island

CUPE PEI held a very well attended convention at the end of May. Their 42nd annual convention saw over a hundred delegates and a dozen guests gather to hear reports from both the division and the National Officers, and debate resolutions concerning affordable housing, a national pharmacare program, improved non-profit nursing home funding, and more.

The division and CUPE 3324 have begun work on an anti-privatization campaign to bring PEI Emergency Medical Services in house. This would be beneficial for the 152 paramedics represented by CUPE 3324. Residents are frustrated by unacceptable ambulance wait times and staff are burning out from overwork and understaffing.

CUPE PEI has also participated in the ongoing *Employment Standards Act* review. A broad and progressive submission was put forward, calling for a modernization of the legislation.

In the municipal sector, a strike was avoided in the town of Kensington, after bargaining resumed and municipal government took members of CUPE 4893 seriously.

PEI now has Canada's highest cost-of-living increases, and this will inevitably make wage increases a top priority at bargaining tables across the province. We are entering a period of intense bargaining on the Island, as many collective agreements are opened for renegotiation or will be open in the coming months.

Atlantic Region

Newfoundland and Labrador

CUPE NL held its annual convention in Grand Falls-Windsor at the beginning of May. Delegates had the opportunity to hear from Debra Merrier and Aubrey Gonsalves,

Diversity Vice-Presidents representing Indigenous members, and black and racialized members, respectively. Their remarks were very insightful and much appreciated by the delegates. On the second day of convention, delegates gathered early in the morning for a smudging ceremony. Delegates also stood in solidarity with members of CUPE 1349 working for the City of Grand Falls-Windsor, whose employer is threatening to outsource some of their work. After a 14-week lock-out last fall, a collective agreement was signed, but the city is already looking at ways to circumvent the job protections that are in place.

Delegates held sectoral meetings before convention began, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Municipal Occupational Group was re-established with an elected interim committee. Municipal locals will now have a forum to coordinate and strategize, as well as discuss the trends at their respective bargaining tables, such as the increasing presence of lawyers and outside consultants hired to bargain on behalf of employers. The collective agreements for locals 569, 1289, 2099, and 5459 all expire on June 30, 2022, and with that in mind municipal locals got together at the end of May to prepare and build solidarity.

The Liberal government released its budget in early April. The government tailored it to try to pass it off as a good news story, but CUPE members will not be fooled. The budget makes real cuts to program spending, by freezing funding to last year's levels despite rising inflation. We know that the Furey government is planning freezes (i.e. cuts) every year until 2026-2027.

The budget mentions the PERT Report, the Review of Provincial Assets (Rothschild Bank Report), and the NL Health Accord. These reports are political tools the provincial government is using to soften up Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to believe that there is no alternative to cutting services and selling our public assets to the highest, most well-connected bidder. The budget lists three Crown corporations (Atlantic Lottery Corporation, Nalcor Energy, and NL Liquor) as contributing \$497 million to government coffers last year. These three Crown corporations are expected to contribute nearly double and bring in \$914 million this year. Why would anyone think selling-off and privatizing publicly owned assets is a good idea?

The government has projected the average price of oil for the year to be 25% less than what most banks are predicting. If the price of oil keeps up as predicted, it could mean the province will get more than \$200 million in royalties. In other words, there is money in the budget to pay for real wage increases for public sector workers – the Furey government is just trying to hide it.

CUPE NL is mobilizing members across the province to be ready for bargaining, but also to be ready to fight back against the government's austerity agenda.

Nova Scotia

The Nova Scotia Division held its annual convention in Halifax at the end of May. Delegates debated and adopted a number of important resolutions to address violence in the workplace, the value of care work, labour shortages and retention issues, paid sick days, and to have the mileage rate increased for workers who use their own car for their job, just to name a few. Delegates also adopted a resolution to create a municipal sectoral group to network and coordinate activities, and held elections for executive board and committee positions.

One of the convention highlights was the unveiling of the Betty Jean Sutherland Sister of the Year award and the presentation to its first recipient: CUPE Nova Scotia President Nan McFadgen. The award was created by the division's Women's Committee to recognize a union sister who has proven their dedication to the labour movement specifically in advancing equality rights for women. Betty Jean Sutherland was a former president of CUPE NS, and of CUPE 2330. She was a personal care worker, and later a CUPE national representative who dedicated her life to raise the voices of all women, an activist and mentor who inspired women within the labour movement and her community to speak out and fight for fairness and equity. She passed away in December 2021. The Women's Committee paid tribute to Nan's true values and leadership and emphasized that she embodies the principles that Betty Jean lived by.

Nova Scotia's conservative government tabled its budget at the end of March and CUPE Nova Scotia reacted by highlighting the major gaps in funding. Decades of neglect and staffing shortages across care sectors were not adequately addressed, including in hospitals, long-term care, home support, community services, and child care. In long-term care, the budget allocated funding for nursing, but only a marginal increase to the hands-on care provided by continuing care assistants. Government has not earmarked funds for dietary and kitchen staff, laundry, maintenance, recreation and administrative staff who work in hospitals and nursing homes. Patients and residents receive care and services that are provided by a team of staff. By not extending a wage adjustment to all job classifications, the province is not recognizing the value these workers provide.

This government clearly showed its true colors when the premier refused to repeal Bill 148 and commented that they didn't need to, because it was redundant. This infamous bill stripped public workers of their fundamental right to bargain collectively; it stripped away their retirement benefits and legislated a wage mandate that deprived them of a real salary increase. The bill casts a dark shadow over every bargaining table. CUPE and union allies in Nova Scotia are insisting that the premier send a message that the government respects workers and unions and wants to rebuild the relationships that were damaged under Stephen McNeil's Liberals. If the PC government intends to continue the Liberal legacy of breaking the trust of Nova Scotian workers, then they can expect to find themselves back in court.

CUPE 933, which represents over 150 employees in Cape Breton Regional Municipality's (CBRM) civic centre, 911 centre and police lockup, called for conciliation in May after contract talks broke down with CBRM. The employer issued a final offer after only four days of bargaining. The main sticking points are wages, benefits and leaves. CBRM refused to offer wage adjustments with economic increases on par with their CUPE counterparts, the outside workers represented by CUPE 759. Inside workers have different issues, but expect to be treated equally when it comes to wages.

Québec

Although public sector negotiations in Quebec were concluded only a short while ago, our members are already prepared, mobilized, and ready to move forward in solidarity, for the next round. Indeed, the province's major labour federations, the QFL, CSN and CSQ, recently announced the creation of a Common Front to spearhead the upcoming renewal of the sector's collective agreements.

Among the different challenges to be met, the recruitment and retention of personnel will be one of the key elements to be put on the table by the Common Front. Moreover, we've identified solutions to address these challenges.

Labour shortages, which were already present prior to the pandemic, have increased over the past two years, notably owing to the difficult working conditions that can't compete with what exists elsewhere. Meanwhile, in this election year, the Common Front is relaying a clear message of solidarity to the Legault government: meaningful measures need to be implemented quickly, and we have proposals to make this happen. Improved salaries will have to take into account inflation, which is sharply impacting Quebec families these days. Our demands will be fleshed out in the course of consultations that we are already conducting with our members.

SCFP-Québec held a key strategic meeting this past spring. This forum on the state of the union attracted some 400 delegates to discuss the state of affairs and the future of trade unionism in general, and CUPE in particular. Many constructive and critical exchanges took place amongst the activists, which will certainly help both our members and leaders to prepare themselves to deal with the many post-pandemic challenges that we now face, taking into account the needs and approaches to which the younger generations will be able to relate.

After joining our ranks in 2019, the employees of Bell Media in Quebec finally succeeded in signing their first collective agreement. CUPE 5407 held a contract ratification meeting in April, where the members voted 93% in favour of the collective agreement, with 77% of the members in attendance.

These negotiations required more than 40 days of bargaining, and numerous obstacles were overcome. In addition to it being a first negotiation, the union had to make many adjustments owing to the pandemic, to Bell Media acquiring Noovo in the summer 2020, to Bell Media centralizing its offices in the fall of 2021, to rising inflation as of 2021, in

addition to a complex and rapidly evolving workplace. The four-year agreement includes a new salary structure that will see average salary increases of 22.55%.

The SCFP-Québec Provincial Municipal Council held its convention in Saint Sauveur in mid-May, and I had the opportunity to attend and participate. The convention assembled together CUPE leaders from municipalities across the province. They debated and adopted a series of strategies for the next two years, including communications, how the organization should make use of technology, addressing the challenges facing our regional councils, as well as mobilization issues in the sector. The participants debated various concerns, including human rights, mental health, work-life balance, Quebec's occupational health and safety regime, political action, and developments in the area of labour law.

Ontario

Over the course of three days in late April, CUPE Ontario held its 58th Annual Convention virtually, with the theme "Demand Better". Delegates from across the province debated and adopted 38 resolutions and a bold action plan.

The action plan commits the division to work with allies to push the provincial government to invest in stronger public services, advocate and organize for better wages, commit to political action, organize against white supremacy, and to build worker power.

The provincial election held this spring returned Doug Ford to the premier's office for a second term, with a larger majority government and 83 seats in the provincial legislature. The Ontario NDP will form the Official Opposition for a second successive term, with 31 seats and the Ontario Liberals, with only eight seats, failed to achieve official party status. Andrea Horwath, the leader of the Ontario NDP, announced on election night that she would be resigning as leader of the party, a position she has held since 2009.

Throughout the campaign, Ford and his Conservative party dodged accountability for their dubious record of pandemic mismanagement, wage restraints, and creating a crisis in acute health care and long-term care homes which have seen a mass exodus of health care workers from the sector. Their candidates dropped out of debates across the province, and Ford restricted his media availability throughout the campaign in order to tightly control his message.

I want to thank CUPE members and staff for their incredible efforts on this campaign and congratulate members of the CUPE family who were elected, including Jill Andrew, Chris Glover, Joel Harden, Chandra Pasma, and Tom Rakocevic.

The Healthcare of Ontario Pension Plan (HOOPP) has announced a major benefit improvement for all members active in the pension plan effective January 1, 2023. The

change will increase the accrual rate on average annualized earnings to 1.9% from 1.75%, for all service up to December 31, 2020, and to 2% for all service in 2021 and 2022. There will be corresponding bridge benefit reductions as the amounts increase. CUPE's representatives on the HOOPP board played a vital role in quarter-backing this plan improvement which thousands of CUPE members in the plan will benefit from.

Ontario was the last jurisdiction in Canada that had not signed onto the federal government's child care plan, which aims to reduce child care fees to an average of \$10 a day by 2026. On March 28, the province finally signed a \$13.2 billion agreement to lower the cost of child care.

CUPE Ontario and child care advocates are warning the Ford government that without a better plan to solve the child care workforce shortage, their budget's promise to build 86,000 new child care spaces will fail. While the agreement will provide more than a billion dollars in federal funding this year alone, it is estimated that less than 4% of the agreement's funds will go to improving compensation for frontline early childhood educators.

Manitoba

The Canada-Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Agreement has been extended. The agreement promises investment of more than \$19 million in the early childhood workforce, to begin offering targeted support for the recruitment and retention of qualified staff for the early learning sector.

CUPE is working to ensure that this additional funding goes towards our members working in the sector – through bargaining or, for those locals who won't be bargaining in the near future, using collective agreement language that provides us with an opportunity to participate in the determination of any additional funding received.

While these funding measures are an important step forward, more is needed to adequately address the real wage needs of members in these sectors.

Our nearly 18,000 health care members across Manitoba have been without a contract for more than five years. Government restructuring and forced representation votes caused some of the delay, and the pandemic can be blamed for part of it, too. But growing frustration at the slow pace of bargaining led to strong strike votes last August, and our health care locals have been ramping up the pressure on their employer and government ever since.

An online petition calling on the province to prioritize bargaining for health care support workers resulted in thousands of emails in government inboxes. A multi-platform campaign that included advertising on social media, radio, tv, and billboards raised the profile of our members and the shameful way the employer was dragging their feet at

the bargaining table. And members took action as well, with information pickets and workplace actions including “Wear Black Wednesdays”.

The campaign was a success, as the pace of bargaining increased. Although an impasse was reached last month, progress is being made with the help of a mediator. We remain hopeful that we can achieve a fair deal that leaves no health care worker behind.

Saskatchewan

CUPE Saskatchewan held its annual convention April 25-27, with delegates gathering in Saskatoon to set the priorities of the division for the year ahead, elect executive board members, and hear from speakers on a wide variety of subjects including workplace health and safety, just transition, CUPE’s Code of Conduct, and the rise of hate (featuring Aubrey Gonsalves, CUPE’s Diversity Vice-President representing racialized workers).

Convention delegates were also treated to a preview of a new documentary about the very real threat to public services from funding cuts, service cuts, and privatization. Over the last 15 years, the Saskatchewan Party government has sold more than \$1.2 billion in public assets and eliminated more than 1,225 jobs through privatization and contracting out.

The documentary, [*Meeting Human Needs – The fight for Saskatchewan’s public services*](#), was formally released by CUPE Saskatchewan at the beginning of June, and is accompanied by an online campaign to raise awareness of public services and put pressure on the provincial government to protect and properly fund them.

The Education Worker’s Steering Committee held a day of action at the Saskatchewan legislature on May 10 to demand better funding for the province’s public education system. While the province claims they are providing “record funding” for school divisions in this year’s budget, the reality is that the meager increase doesn’t come close to covering the increased costs of fuel, already-negotiated wage increases, and other basic operating costs.

Members explained that school divisions were being forced to cut student support time and lay off staff. These cuts not only impact classroom support for students most in need, but mean that education assistants are losing up to 10 hours a month in wages and pensionable earnings.

Inside the legislature, the Sask NDP grilled the Minister of Education about the lack of investment in public education, pointing out that staff-to-student ratios are climbing while per-student funding has dropped.

Alberta

Workers at the City of Chestermere, seeking the security of union representation in the face of uncertainty and upheaval in the workplace, have joined CUPE in an overwhelming vote in favour of certification. Earlier this year, the province launched a review of city operations following a number of complaints received from both city employees and residents. That review led to the Minister of Municipal Affairs ordering a formal investigation.

These 130 members will join CUPE 37, which represents workers at the nearby City of Calgary.

CUPE 1505 is speaking out about the closure of the MacDonald Island Dance Academy in Fort McMurray. The academy is an important cultural component of the not-for-profit Regional Recreation Corporation of Wood Buffalo, which was created by the municipal government in 2012.

The academy was hit hard by the pandemic, but was a popular and profitable program in the years prior. The union worked with its members at the academy to provide an alternate business case that would increase the marketability and sustainability of the program, but the CEO refused to meet with the dance instructors to discuss it and instead rejected the proposal.

The union is calling for a formal investigation under the *Municipal Government Act*.

Following an internal leadership review that did not turn out in his favour, Premier Jason Kenney announced in May that he would resign as leader of the United Conservative Party – although he will remain as premier until a new UCP leader is chosen in October.

Nobody expects this change in leadership will result in any relief for the people of Alberta who have been struggling for more than three years under this anti-worker, anti-union government that has been intent on undermining and dismantling public services. And CUPE will keep fighting the UCP agenda until they are removed from office in the next provincial election scheduled for May 2023.

British Columbia

CUPE BC held their largest-ever division convention in Victoria at the end of April, with more than 500 delegates registered to participate in debate and deliberations that set the agenda for the division for the year ahead. A focus of the convention was on making our work more inclusive of equity, diversity and reconciliation, and on creating safer union spaces for Indigenous workers, women and other marginalized voices.

A wide array of speakers addressed convention, including Premier John Horgan, journalist and author Desmond Cole, and federal NDP leader Jagmeet Singh. Elder

Sam George of the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation, who opened convention, was present throughout the four-day event.

Provincial bargaining got underway early this spring in several key sectors, including K-12, health care and social services. It became clear quite early, at each table, that we were too far apart on monetary matters. We partnered with other major public sector unions to put pressure on the province, including an impactful joint advertising campaign. This resulted in a revised offer, which our bargaining committees deemed still too low, especially given the inflationary economic climate.

We continue work to mobilize our members and are organizing strike preparation workshops for our locals, while we await a better offer. In the K-12 sector we are also opening bargaining at local tables with individual school districts.

Local government elections will be held in October, and our members in BC have already begun the work of ensuring progressive candidates who support public services and the people who deliver them will be on the ballot. There is a lot at stake for our locals and members in the municipal, library, and K-12 sectors. We are working with labour councils on candidate endorsements, and developing plans to engage our members as well as our neighbours in communities across the province.

Hospital Employees' Union (HEU)

HEU continues provincial bargaining for three multi-union collective agreements: facilities, community health, and community social services. While there are unique issues at each table, there are also many shared priorities.

It's common knowledge that workers in health care and social services have been incredibly challenged throughout the pandemic. It stretched the capacity of our members in these sectors, just as they stretched the capacity of these public services.

The unions are hoping to address the root causes of many of these challenges through bargaining, and have tabled strong language on improved and preventative workplace health and safety measures, better training and information sharing, mental health supports, and avenues to resolve workload concerns.

These proposals have their root in stories gathered from frontline workers, and those stories are being told at the bargaining table by committee members to reinforce the need for change. Addressing and resolving these issues through bargaining is key to keeping health care and social services functioning in communities across the province.

Airlines

Since April 5, CUPE 4059 members Christina Carello and Alexander Rozov, flight attendants at Pivot Airlines, have been held in the Dominican Republic after discovering

and reporting suspected contraband on their plane. Two pilots and a flight mechanic are also detained.

The crew followed all local and international protocols when they discovered the packages. By reporting the situation, the crew prevented a possible air disaster resulting from the added weight and unsafe location of the contraband on the plane. Despite that, Dominican authorities want the crew imprisoned during the investigation, which could take months. Our members have faced threats, including explicit threats on their lives, for their actions, and there is grave concern for their safety, mental health, and physical well-being. CUPE is doing everything in its power to have the Canadian government intervene and repatriate our members.

At the end of March, the newly organized flight attendants at PAL Airlines ratified their first collective agreement. CUPE 5451 negotiated a new wage structure and a credit system in line with industry standards, where flight attendants are able to select their own schedules and awards credits for flights, reserve duty and statutory days. The local was also able to correct the inequity in how statutory holidays were being paid, and a premium for staff training was obtained.

CUPE was invited to make submissions to Transport Canada as part of the public interest review process of the proposed acquisition of Sunwing Vacations and Sunwing Airlines by WestJet. This will take place at the end of June.

Organizing

For the reporting period of April 1 to May 31, 2022, CUPE welcomed 755 new members in 24 bargaining units, including 215 members in social services, 161 in the municipal sector, 53 in the education sector and ten in post-secondary.

There are currently 84 active campaigns underway that, if successful, would welcome 27,193 new members.

In the Atlantic region, we currently have eight active campaigns that could see 559 new members join our CUPE family. We welcomed eight new members, and efforts continue to organize 380 new members at Paladin Security.

In the Maritimes, there are currently nine active campaigns which could, if successful, bring 868 workers into CUPE, including 200 student employees at Mount Alison University.

In Quebec, CUPE welcomed 94 new municipal sector workers, in seven different bargaining units, into our union.

Ontario welcomed 196 new members, and has 17 active campaigns in various sectors that could see 6,902 new members join CUPE – including 4,000 teaching assistants from the University of Waterloo.

Manitoba has eight active campaigns, which could see an additional 2,326 new members join our union, including 2,100 workers in the education sector. Manitoba welcomed 44 new CUPE members since the last reporting period.

There are five active organizing campaigns in Saskatchewan, including in the municipal sector, social services, and education, which could see 223 workers join CUPE.

Alberta has eight active organizing campaigns that could bring in 13,186 new members into CUPE. Three of these are in the social service sector where CUPE is looking at adding 12,120 new members. Alberta welcomed 138 new members into since the last reporting period, including 130 new social service sector members in the City of Chestermere.

Organizers in British Columbia continue to be busy with 31 active campaigns across various sectors, with the potential of adding close to 2,860 new members to our union. CUPE welcomes 185 new members from British Columbia into our union.

HEU welcomes 93 new CUPE members from two bargaining units since the last reporting period.

In Memoriam/Personal

I offer my sincere condolences to the families of the following CUPE members, former staff and retirees who have passed away in this reporting period.

Members

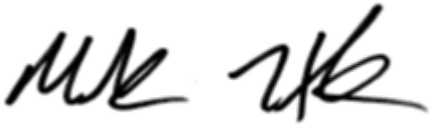
- Doug Burkinshaw CUPE 1767 – BC
- Bill Ferguson CUPE 7800 – ON
- Justina Giesbrecht CUPE 204 – MB
- Michael Boulanger CUPE 4705 – ON
- Alain Robert CUPE 4000 – ON
- Bernice Kirk CUPE 561 – BC - Retired
Former CUPE BC President

- Sean Foley CUPE 8920
- Michael Townley Potts CUPE 407 - Retired
- Normand Piché CUPE 1983
- Doug Birkinshaw CUPE 1767
- Sherri Anne D'Amour CUPE 5167

Retired Staff

- John Spence
Head Accountant
National Office
- Vallie Stearns
Research Representative
Moncton Area Office
- Glenys Jean MacDonald
Secretary
Lethbridge Area Office
- Réjean Gauthier
National Representative
Quebec Regional Office

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MH' followed by a stylized flourish.

MARK HANCOCK
National President

:tp/ceu