Report of the Canadian Council to the 30th Constitutional Convention of the Canadian Labour Congress

Lifting Everyone Up





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Message from the President

Friends,

Over the past two years, I have had the incredible opportunity to speak with workers from all industries and sectors, in every corner of the country.

This journey has convinced me that when workers organize together, we lift everyone up. Hard work, determination, and relentless commitment to building a better, brighter future for workers and their communities shone through in every conversation, and I am proud to stand in solidarity with each and every one of you.

When emergency rooms overflowed and our loved ones couldn't access essential care, we organized together and won new health care deals in every province and \$46 billion in additional health care funding.

When the ever-increasing prices of basic necessities made it difficult for workers and their families to make ends meet, we came together and delivered real relief. Canada's unions fought for parties to work together on a progressive policy agenda for workers, and we have made concrete gains as a result of the landmark confidence-and-supply agreement between the New Democrats and the Liberal Party.



- We won an expanded and increased GST rebate, putting money back into people's pockets. We won dental care for low-income households, so our loved ones can see a dentist when they need to.
- We made vital progress on affordable housing, with support for new home buyers, a rent subsidy for low-income renters, and billions in investments toward affordable housing and infrastructure.
- We made great strides for women and parents by winning historic commitments for \$10 per day child care programs in all provinces, and we saw decades of union activism pay off with the implementation of the *Pay Equity Act*.
- We refused to back down to discrimination and violence, and it paid off. Canada finally ratified the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 190, a historic global treaty acknowledging the universal right to a world of work free from violence and harassment.

We also won a much-needed ban on conversion therapy, a monumental step toward ending homophobic and transphobic hate.

When the pandemic exposed the widespread inequity in our economy, workers and their unions demanded justice. Together we won billions in emergency pandemic benefits for workers who got sick, lost their jobs, or had their hours reduced. When the time came, we demanded the right for workers to return to good jobs.

We won a federal minimum wage and ten days of paid sick leave, so workers don't have to choose between their health and a paycheque. Now we will keep fighting to win paid sick leave for all workers in Canada.

Together, we fought hard to secure and defend workers' rights. When Ontario Premier Doug Ford trampled on our right to strike and imposed a collective agreement on some of the province's lowest-paid education workers, we forced him to back down and sent him back to the bargaining table.

In British Columbia, we celebrated the government's move to restore card check certification. Being part of a union and having a collective agreement means stability, predictability and better conditions for workers. We will fight to see this victory spread across Canada.

After a decades-long fight against corporate greed, we secured critical pension protection legislation that prioritizes workers' and retirees' pensions ahead of big banks and CEO bonuses.

Our collective success is a testament to the strength and solidarity of our movement, and we are just getting started.

Looking ahead, the challenges and opportunities that lie before us are clear.

Decades of underfunding, privatization, and a lack of support for workers mean our care system is chronically understaffed. Recent investments only scratch the surface of the problem.

Wealthy CEOs are reporting record-breaking profits, and their friends in the Conservative Party want to divide us and make it easier for corporations to pad their wallets at workers' expense. We must reject their calls for privatization and cuts to the services we rely on. And we must continue to work together to drive down emissions and tackle the climate crisis for the sake of our communities and our planet.

I know we've got what it takes.

As a united labour movement, we can build a better, brighter future. A future with good, sustainable jobs and a social safety net that is there when we need it. A future where everyone has a place to call home and access to programs that make life more affordable. A future where we've worked for true reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. A future where our loved ones are cared for.

Let's organize together and lift everyone up.

In solidarity,

Bea Bruske

President





Forward Together: Lifting Everyone Up

DELIVERING A LIFELINE FOR WORKERS

The last two years challenged workers in new ways. The pandemic highlighted the systemic inequity and precarity in our economy. It redefined who essential workers are, and it exposed the pervasiveness of work defined by low wages, unstable hours, and lack of access to basic worker rights.

But Canada's unions recognized we had an unprecedented opportunity to persuade governments to embrace bold solutions to systemic disparities, and our Forward Together campaign delivered solutions that lifted everyone up.

Through the pandemic, we organized, demanded, and won critical supports for working families, including emergency pandemic benefits, expanded Employment Insurance (EI) support, recovery benefits, and paid sick leave.

We supported frontline workers by winning better health and safety guidelines, wages, working conditions and job security through our Heroes Deserve Better campaign.

We sounded the alarm about the pandemic's disproportionate impact on Black and racialized Canadians, Indigenous peoples, newcomers, women, and people with disabilities. These inequities include marginalization, systemic discrimination and racism, unconscious bias, and violence.

And as communities across Canada grappled with the pandemic, the need for direct resources to support municipal infrastructure and programs couldn't have been greater, so we reminded the federal government that local governments know how to make the most of every dollar to build better communities.

So we fought for and won a doubling of the Canada Community-Building Fund (formerly known as the Gas Tax Fund). That fight continues, because we know that permanently growing the fund would directly empower local government to do even more and build the country Canadians deserve.

And as the pandemic's fourth wave raged in many communities and Conservatives campaigned on promises to cut off emergency benefits, we mobilized, demanded, and won an extension to the Canada Recovery Benefit until October 2021: still a critical lifeline for millions of workers who'd lost their jobs because of the pandemic.

We also won an extension of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, a benefit that protected jobs by making it easier for employers to retain staff, and that also eased the path to economic recovery.

MAKING LIFE MORE AFFORDABLE

As workers dared to dream of a post-pandemic recovery, they grappled with an affordability crisis, falling further behind with every trip to the grocery store or pharmacy, every paycheque, and every bill.

Wages are stagnant, prices are going up and too many companies use supply chains as an excuse to raise prices and extract outrageous profits. Through the pandemic, corporate profits had soared and the gap between rich and poor widened. While Canada's grocery CEOs celebrate record-breaking profits, workers and their families remain at breaking point.

But we knew that when workers organize together, we could make life more affordable and lift everyone up. So we organized, creating the tools workers needed to win change.

We highlighted the reality that large corporations and banks, and their CEOs and shareholders, profiteered off the pandemic, freely laying off workers and keeping wages low, and we demanded justice.

Thousands of people joined our campaign against corporate greed, signing letters to grocery stores, sending grocery receipts to the finance minister, and calling on the Bank of Canada to pause the reckless interest rate hikes crushing workers. Thousands more acted with us to push for El reform, investments in public services, climate action that puts workers first and more.

We organized to deliver relief by cutting costs for working families, and in March 2022, we delivered, winning a confidence-and-supply agreement between the government and the NDP that promised powerful wins on critical issues Canada's unions have been pushing for years, if not decades, including:

- Dental care for low-income kids under 12 and everyone making less than \$90,000 a year;
- Pharmacare by 2025 with a national formulary for essential medicines and bulk purchasing plan in place so that Canadians wouldn't be forced to choose between buying food or paying for medication;
- An immediate boost to health funding for more nurses and doctors, better mental health support, and improved health outcomes;
- Vital progress on affordable housing, helping renters and new home buyers;
- Enshrining national early learning and child care in an Act, protecting long-term funding for affordable public child care spaces. For parents, and especially women who were pushed to the economic sidelines by the pandemic, this is critical; and
- Long fought for anti-scab legislation, the implementation of paid sick days for federally regulated workers and Just Transition legislation, wwso we can tackle climate change while leaving no workers behind.



STOPPING THE CONSERVATIVES

The September 2021 federal election posed an enormous threat to the hard-fought gains we'd made for workers through the pandemic. So we organized together to protect those gains by stopping the Conservatives. New Democrats proved vital in the 43rd Parliament in pressing for pandemic priorities that benefited workers' most, including wage subsidies, and emergency response benefits. So we also organized to elect as many NDP members of Parliament as possible.

We re-tooled and strengthened our Forward Together campaign, raising awareness and increasing voter turnout among union members and progressive voters. That included the largest digital outreach and get-outthe-vote mobilization effort in Canadian union history. We combined our digital tactics with on-the-ground labour canvasses and get-out-the-vote efforts in targeted ridings across the country.

Our messaging was clear, consistent, and heard everywhere. We said a worker-centred recovery meant:

- Replacing lost jobs with better ones by making new investments in infrastructure, public services, safe workplaces, domestic procurement and manufacturing, a green economy, and the care economy;
- Fixing the health care crisis with investments to bring long-term care and prescription drugs into our universal public health care system, expand access to mental health services, and strengthen our ability to respond to the next public health crisis;
- Disaster-proofing our social safety net by overhauling the El program and making new investments in child care, retirement security, affordable housing, education and skills training; and
- Ensuring the wealthy pay their fair share in recognition that the economic impacts of the pandemic have increased the disparity between the rich and everyone else.

We pursued an aggressive, proactive, and reactive earned media strategy, working to break into the news cycle, and issuing timely responses and critiques to policy announcements. When political party leaders openly asked unionized workers to vote for them, we were relentless in holding them to account.

- Over the course of the campaign we reached 9.6 million people: that's an advertisement value of over \$8.8 million.
- And when the election was over we had proven again that when workers organize together, we lift everyone up. We had stopped the Conservatives and denied the Liberals a majority government. The NDP and the Bloc Québécois held enough seats to hold the balance of power, giving us the power we needed to keep delivering for workers.

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CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS

DEMANDING A WORKER-LED RECOVERY

Emergency pandemic benefits were set to expire just weeks after the federal election, and the job market was barely starting to recover. Almost half a million Canadians had been without work for six months or longer.

We knew that workers were giving up because they couldn't find work, or because they couldn't access the services they needed to go to work – like child care and long-term care. We also knew the pandemic wasn't over, and that we still had a ways to go before businesses and workplaces fully reopened.

So we organized together to win the sustained support workers and their families needed.

We reminded the prime minister that during the election he had promised to have workers' backs, and demanded he extend the Canada Recovery Benefit, a vital lifeline for hundreds of thousands of workers.

And we highlighted that without workers, there could be no recovery.

Workers wanted to return to good jobs that offer decent pay, benefits and a path to unionization.



BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

We know that when workers organize together, we can elect progressives in municipal councils and school boards and lift everyone up.

So we have worked hard to build the capacity of the labour movement at the local level by engaging and mobilizing workers around campaigns and issues in their communities, and to recruit, train, endorse and elect progressive candidates to municipal councils and school boards.

In 2021 and 2022 we mobilized around local elections in Alberta, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario and Prince Edward Island:

- Engaging with more than 70 labour councils and affiliates.
- Training over 300 candidates, campaign managers and volunteers.
- Endorsing over 600 candidates.
- Distributing over 250,000 endorsement cards to members.
- Implementing a digital and social media campaign to promote our endorsed candidates and get out the vote.

And our work paid off, electing hundreds of progressive candidates to councils and school boards across the country. Many of the municipal candidates we helped elect are union activists who will be on the side of workers when important decisions are made.



Strengthening the Care Economy

DELIVERING THE CARE WE NEED

For the last two years, workers have organized together to prescribe the solutions that will help fix Canada's care crisis and lift everyone up.

And we have delivered.

We have organized, demanded, and won new health care accords that add 46 billion dollars in new who are living it every day and the people who rely investments over ten years. We won a commitment to start implementing pharmacare by 2025. We made in dignity. historic strides for women and parents across Canada by winning commitments for \$10-a-day child care When workers organize together, we can end the care programs across the country. And we've won dental care crisis and lift everyone up. for low-income kids under 12, and by 2025, for everyone making less than \$90,000 a year.

And now we are organizing together to demand more.

The pandemic showed us that care work is primarily unrecognized, unpaid or underpaid, and that many care services are hard to access, unaffordable, underfunded or privatized.

It showed us how much we rely on care workers to support our families, our parents, our neighbours, and our loved ones, and that if we can't access the care we need, communities fall apart.

It showed us that care work is the foundation of the economy, but is too often misunderstood, invisible and undervalued.

So we created our Show We Care campaign to help shift how Canadian workers and the broader public think about care work, who is doing it, how we can support and value care workers, and how we can make concrete improvements to Canada's care systems.

That campaign is about all care work, including health care and mental health care, child care, early childhood education, care for the elderly and people with disabilities, domestic work, and other vital social and health care services that support our families and communities.

We are demanding the investments we need in all of these public care services and the workers who provide them, including a national training, recruitment and retention strategy for care sectors that includes better pay, stable work, decent working conditions, and bargaining rights for care workers.

We are also demanding that every step taken to fix the care crisis is informed and led by the frontline workers on care to get to work, go to school, and live their lives



CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS

WE'VE WON BILLIONS IN NEW HEALTH CARE FUNDING

When workers organize together, we can deliver the care we need. And over the last two years Canada's unions have proven that by defending our public system and winning billions in new health care funding.

With the federal election looming in 2021 and COVID-19 cases on the rise, we worked hard to expose how electing a federal Conservative government would be disastrous for our health care system.

We exposed the truth behind former conservative leader Erin O'Toole's cynical attempt to win over workers and reminded Canadians what had happened the last time the federal Conservatives were in power. We pointed to their track record of tax cuts for the wealthy and austerity for everyone else, and how that led to health care cuts, slow economic growth, and rising inequality.

We highlighted how Alberta's health care system was buckling under then-premier Jason Kenney's mishandling of the pandemic's fourth wave. We asked why Ontario's Conservatives were cutting spending while health cuts were leaving patients in the cold. We warned voters that from Ontario to Alberta to Saskatchewan, Conservative mismanagement and health cuts had pushed health care systems to the brink.

Our hard work paid off: we defended our public health care system by stopping the Conservatives, and we set the stage to demand and deliver solutions that would lift everyone up.

With the Council of the Federation meeting canceled after the federal election, we called on the premiers and the prime minister to listen to the millions of Canadians demanding new health care funding.



We reminded them that the future of Canada's cherished public health care was hanging in the balance, and that a no-strings-attached approach is a non-starter for Canadians looking for quality care. We warned that handing out blank cheques to Conservative premiers would not fix the crisis and demanded that new investments be tied to achieving real improvement to our public health care systems. When the premiers finally met in July of 2022, CLC President Bea Bruske was on hand to welcome the premiers' call for increased federal health transfers and to remind them that new funding must take action to fix the health worker crisis, address the dangerous health care worker shortage, and improve patient access and care.

We organized and we demanded an end to the push for privatization, for-profit medical facilities, experiments with for-profit care, and virtual for-profit care, all of which mean less funding for our public health system and making the health care worker shortage even worse.

We built on our election organizing work, driving our message home by engaging thousands of labour activists in a digital campaign and organizing hundreds of lobby day meetings with ministers and MPs.

We organized and we won new measures to protect health care workers from harassment with Bill C-3 amending the *Criminal Code*, but cautioned that the right to strike and organize must be explicitly protected in any new law.

We organized and we won \$2 billion in new funding for public health care in the spring of 2022: this was critical to helping address backlogs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and helping provinces improve access to primary care and bolster mental health care, long-term care, and home care. This win was a clear sign of the benefits we'd see from the Liberal-NDP confidence-and-supply agreement.

But we were very clear that in order to preserve and protect our public system in the long run and fight creeping privatization, we needed permanent, accountable, and consistent increased federal funding through the Canada Health Transfer.

- We organized, and this year we won \$46.2 billion in new funding for public health care. We are celebrating this win, but we are still sounding the alarm that with no strings attached, this deal will not come close to fixing our health care crisis.
- We organized, we demanded better, and we delivered. But we know that extreme staffing shortages and years of chronic underfunding continue to plague our public health care system. Emergency rooms are overflowing, children's hospitals are swamped, and wait times for
- critical surgeries keep getting longer. Tragic reports of people dying as they wait in emergency rooms for care are shaking communities across Canada.
- d But we also know that when workers organize together, we can deliver the care we need and lift everyone up. So we will continue to organize and demand more funding for public health care, an end to for-profit health care, and concrete solutions to fix the critical shortage of health workers.

WE WON COMMITMENTS **TO \$10-A-DAY CHILD CARE** ACROSS CANADA

When workers organize together, we can deliver the child care women and families need and lift everyone up. So over the last two years, we organized together, continuing our decades-long struggle to win affordable, quality, accessible, inclusive child care for all.

We made sure that child care was on the ballot in the federal election, calling out the Conservatives for threatening to tear up agreements and eliminate thousands of new child care spaces.

And after stopping the Conservatives, we turned our focus to ensuring that agreements with the provinces and territories were delivering what we need on the path to a truly universal Canada-wide system of high-quality, affordable child care.

We organized together to overcome repeated stalling by Conservative premiers on agreements for Alberta, Ontario, and New Brunswick, and celebrated as the last of 13 agreements with the provinces and territories were signed. This was a critical victory on the path to having Canada-wide affordable early learning and child care in place in every jurisdiction across our country.

We knew the next step was to ensure the right to affordable child care was enshrined in law and backed by sustainable funding to expand the system and ensure all parents have access to quality, not-for-profit, public child care.

So we organized together, with Child Care Now, a National Day of Action for Child Care in November 2022, demanding better pay and working conditions to solve the child care workforce crisis so families can access high-quality child care.

In December we celebrated the tabling of early learning and child care legislation, Bill C-35, which was the outcome of decades-long mobilization and another sign of the benefits of cooperation across party lines in Parliament.

The legislation includes key principles long advocated for by labour and child care advocates - including affordability, inclusion, high-quality, and accessibility, and the need for flexible services that meet the diverse needs of children and families.

It demonstrates a commitment to long-term, stable funding, establishes an advisory council, and focuses on public, not-for-profit child care.

This is a critical victory because we know that in public, not-for-profit care, child care workers are able to focus on providing the best care, and families are assured that all funding is going into the care of their children, not padding the pockets of investors.

Importantly, the legislation recognizes the importance of child care in meeting Canada's obligations under international human rights instruments such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We also celebrated that the legislation recognizes the need for culturally appropriate early learning and child care for First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and families led by Indigenous people. This is important in the implementation of the Calls to Action made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Calls for Justice made by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

We have so much to celebrate, but so much more to do.

Workers know that the only way we can expand licensed child care is to fix the shortage of early childhood educators and other child care staff.

So we will organize together to ensure that this legislation passes, and that when it does, to ensure that it includes a workforce strategy that delivers real improvements in wages and working conditions for early learning and child care workers.

When workers organize together, we can fix the child care crisis, and lift everyone up.

WE'VE WON A DENTAL CARE PLAN FOR CANADIANS

When workers organize together, we can win change that makes life more affordable and lifts everyone up. And over the last two years we have done that by organizing together, demanding, and winning dental care that will help millions of Canadian families.

For years, workers have been fighting to make dental care part of Canada's publicly funded, universal health care system. Like prescription medication, mental health care, and long-term care, being able to access dental care has for too long relied on the ability to pay, rather than the care people need.

The pandemic and its aftermath made things worse, leaving too many workers and their families struggling to make ends meet and putting dental care even further out of reach.

So we organized together, and in March 2022, we celebrated when Liberals and New Democrats reached an agreement on a progressive agenda for Canada that finally included dental care.

Workers organized together, and we won coverage for children under 12 in families earning less than \$90,000 a year. By 2025, the new benefit will cover everyone making less than \$90,000 a year, making life more affordable for millions of Canadians. We also organized together and won steps to make dental care more accessible for vulnerable communities and those living in remote parts of the country.

When workers organize together, we can deliver the care we need and lift everyone up.

We won coverage for children under 12 in families earning less than \$90,000 a year. By 2025, the new benefit will cover everyone making less than \$90,000 a year.

LIFTING EVERYONE UP

WE'VE WON A COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENT PHARMACARE

When workers organize together, we can make life more affordable by winning pharmacare, and lift everyone up.

Canada's unions have been fighting for a universal pharmacare program for Canadians for decades, and since 2021, we've stepped up that fight, putting pharmacare on the ballot in the federal election, using digital campaigns to engage our members and the public, by making it a key focus of hundreds of lobby day meetings with ministers and MPs, and by keeping our demands alive in the media.

We sounded the alarm as more and more Canadians struggled to fill prescriptions, a problem more acute among women, racialized Canadians, Indigenous people and young people.

We warned about the implications as more and more Canadians dealt with rising costs by avoiding their medications altogether.

We had earlier victories to build on: after years of organizing, the federal government had created a Canadian Drug Agency to plan how a pharmacare plan would work. A federal advisory panel was struck to inform the development of a national drug formulary. These were important victories on the path to pharmacare but we had no firm timeline. So we organized together, and we made it clear: nine in ten Canadians wanted pharmacare. It was time to finish the "unfinished business" of Canadian Medicare.

Workers organized together and we delivered: the historic confidence-and-supply agreement reached between the Liberals and the NDP in March 2022 promised that by 2025, Canada will have pharmacare with a national formulary for essential medicines and bulk purchasing plan in place. Finally, Canadians won't be forced to choose between buying food and paying for medications.

Securing this commitment was a critical victory. But the government can't act soon enough to make pharmacare a reality. With almost one million Canadians cutting back on food or home heating to pay for their medication and another million borrowing money – there is clear urgency.

The government did not invest in pharmacare in the 2023 Federal Budget. So moving forward, this is our challenge: workers will organize together and we will demand that the government stop stalling and act now to deliver the investment we need to make pharmacare a reality.

When workers organize together, we can deliver the universal, publicly funded and publicly delivered pharmacare Canadians need now.





WE'VE WON BETTER STANDARDS IN LONG-TERM CARE

When workers organize together, we can improve long-term care and lift everyone up.

And over the last two years, that organizing was more urgent than ever. In the first months of the pandemic, more than 81 percent of COVID-19 deaths were in long-term care and retirement homes. The numbers were highest in for-profit homes with fewer staff, fewer hours of care per resident per day, lower pay, and more job insecurity.

For long-term care workers, residents, and their families, this tragedy is no surprise. Chronic staff shortages are fueled by low wages, poor working conditions, inadequate benefits and sick days – all of which are burning out staff and fueling more shortages. And that is driving down the quality of resident care.

Workers across the care sector know they've been taken for granted for too long. They know their work is unseen, precarious, and undervalued. They are mostly women, and many are racialized. Long-term care workers are no exception.

But workers are organizing together and delivering change. We demanded and won improvements to the National Long-Term Care Services Standard, making it resident-centered – a more accommodating model that respects residents' personal wishes and works directly with the workers providing the care.

This is an important step on the path to winning the care all long-term care residents deserve, but we know we must keep organizing to make that standard mandatory for all long-term care homes.

Workers are also organizing together to put an end to for-profit long-term care. For-profit homes are run by multinational corporations raking in billions of dollars a year. Those profits are about enriching CEOs and shareholders, not providing the care our loved ones need, or the decent pay and working conditions to their staff that make that quality care possible. Even worse, for-profit long-term care is just making staff shortages worse.

So workers are organizing together to keep residents and workers safe by bringing all long-term care into the public system where it can be regulated under the *Canada Health Act*. We're also organizing to demand the government to act on its promise to table a Safe Long-Term Care Act to ensure that seniors are guaranteed the care they deserve, no matter where they live.

When workers organize together, we can fix the long-term care crisis and deliver the care our loved ones need by making all long-term care public, and winning health and safety protections, better wages and benefits, and pension plans for workers.

WE'VE ORGANIZED TO DELIVER ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH CARE

When workers organize together, we can improve and expand access to mental health care and substance-use health care and lift everyone up.

Before the pandemic, one in five Canadians struggled with mental health issues. By the time they reach 40 years of age, one in two Canadians will have or have had a mental illness.

The stress of the pandemic has exacerbated that crisis, with millions affected by anxiety and despair. More than half of Canadians say their mental health worsened through the pandemic, with women under 55 hit the hardest, along with persons with a disability, and people from low income, Indigenous, racialized, and 2SLGBTQI+ communities.

At the same time, workers and their families can't afford the mental health care they need. And it's costing our economy more than \$50 billion a year.

So workers have organized together to demand investments to improve and expand access to high-quality, accessible and publicly available mental health care and substance use health services, including for prevention and treatment.

Workers have organized together and demanded a Canada Universal Mental Health and Substance Use Health Act with enforceable national standards. And we've organized together to demand a Canada Mental Health and Substance Use Health Act Transfer, allocating permanent, ongoing federal funding for public mental health services.

Workers have organized together, demanded, and won a commitment from the federal government to recognize mental health as a key component of workplace health and safety.

We have so much more to do. But we know that when workers organize together, we can deliver the mental health care people need, and lift everyone up.





Delivering the Supports Workers Need

WE UNITED AND FORCED **DOUG FORD TO BACK DOWN**

When workers organize together, we can defend and expand our rights and lift everyone up.

And last fall when Conservative Premier of Ontario, Doug Ford, tried to defy our power with Bill 28, trampling the right to strike and the right to collective bargaining for 50,000 education workers, we stood united and we forced him to back down.

We knew that an attack on Ontario's education workers was an attack on all workers' rights. We knew that other anti-worker governments were watching and that if Bill 28 stood unopposed, it would open the door to rolling back workers' fundamental freedoms and hard-won union rights.

Right-wing governments have introduced back-to-work legislation and imposed terms and conditions on public sector workers many times before. But Ontario's Bill 28 was unprecedented in the era of Charter-protected collective bargaining - it fundamentally upended the norms that have built up around the constitutional right to collective bargaining and to strike.

This was the first time Canadians had seen the notwithstanding clause used to preemptively interfere with collective bargaining. The legislation didn't just impose a 'collective agreement' and take away the freedom of association guarantee and right to strike in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms: it also preemptively prohibited any legal challenge.

Bill 28 operated "notwithstanding" these Charter protections. It blocked the ability for a legal challenge, despite its infringement on fundamental individual and union rights protected by the Charter. It also overrode Ontario human rights legislation. Bill 28 was an attack on human rights, not just labour rights.

So we united - private and public sector unions, local and national unions, affiliated and non-affiliated – and we organized in support of the CUPE education workers targeted by this act.

This is a bargaining unit of mostly low-wage women workers, many racialized, who had gone without a decent wage increase for years. These are the early childhood educators, custodians, maintenance and library workers, secretaries, educational assistants, and IT professionals that Ontario families and schools depend on. They are the backbone of our education system.

And they were asking for a fair collective bargaining process, decent work for workers and quality education for kids, and exercising their democratic right to strike. Despite the threat of heavy fines, these workers organized together to lift everyone up, and workers and unions across Canada had their backs.

We stood strong, we stood together, and we stood proud. We pledged financial support, organized demonstration lines across the province, and we sent a clear and strong message that we would stand united - and, if necessary organize a province-wide shut down - until this legislation was defeated.

At a historic November 7th news conference in Toronto, labour leaders from across the country, both affiliates and non-affiliates of the CLC, gathered together to denounce the attack on workers, and pledge their support for a united fightback. Even before that news conference started. Ford sent the message that he was backing down - that he was ready to withdraw the offensive legislation and return to the bargaining table.

On November 14, 2022, the Ontario government tabled and passed Bill 35, Keeping Students in Class Repeal Act, 2022, which repealed Bill 28.

Together we defeated Doug Ford and we proved again that when workers unite, we can lift everyone up.

WE WON A FEDERAL MINIMUM WAGE

When workers organize together, we can win better wages and working conditions, and lift everyone up.

And we did just that for workers in federally regulated workplaces by winning a federal minimum wage indexed to inflation, and ten paid sick days

Many jobs in Canada's federally regulated workplaces are unionized: that means workers have decent pay and working conditions. But many in the sector rely on low-wage, insecure, part-time or precarious work. Close to three million Canadians earn \$15 per hour or less. Young workers, women and racialized Canadians are disproportionately represented among workers making minimum wage.

That's why we organized together to demand and win a \$15 per hour federal minimum wage, winning a commitment in Budget 2021, now implemented across the country. As of April 1 this year, because that minimum wage rises with inflation, it has risen to \$16.65 an hour.

WE WON TEN DAYS PAID SICK LEAVE

The pandemic taught us that paid sick leave saves lives. So we organized together to win ten days paid sick leave for workers in federally regulated workplaces.

When the pandemic hit, employment standards legislation in most jurisdictions did not protect workers with the paid sick leave they needed.

Where governments had implemented paid sick days, they were universally inadequate. So when workers got sick, they had to choose between staying home and losing a day's pay, or going into work, infecting others, and delaying their own recovery.

As COVID spread and lives were lost, the federal government was forced to implement emergency and inadequate - COVID paid sick leave.

But workers knew that a temporary fix wasn't the answer. So we organized, uniting with public health professionals to demand paid sick days in employment standards legislation.

Leading up to the 2021 election, the Liberal Party promised ten paid sick days for employees in federally regulated workplaces, but once elected, their legislation didn't go far enough, so we organized together, demanded better, and won.

On December 1, 2022, we celebrated as a new bill meaning ten days paid sick leave for workers in federally regulated workplaces came into force.

This important win provides ten paid sick days to many workers who had none, and an increase to ten days for those who had some.

No worker should have to choose between giving up wages and staying home when sick or putting food on the table. In the current affordability crisis, workers are left facing difficult choices and they shouldn't have to.

So we will organize together to build on this critical first step in our fight to win paid sick leave for all workers in Canada.

No worker should have to choose between giving up wages and staying home when sick or putting food on the table.

WE CELEBRATED AS PAY EQUITY **BECAME LAW**

For decades, workers have been organizing together to lift up pay equity. Today in Canada, women earn just 89 cents for every dollar earned by men, and Indigenous and racialized women and women with a disability earn even less.

So we celebrated when we finally saw the federal Pay Equity Act come into force on August 31, 2021, and we organized together to ensure that workers and their unions were ready to strategically influence and monitor implementation, including organizing a Pay Equity Strategic Summit to build the foundation for the work ahead.

We coordinated strategic meetings with the CLC Pay Equity Ad Hoc Committee and have established a pay equity listserv so affiliates with members in the federally regulated industries can exchange information and coordinate efforts to ensure that employers comply with the legislation and ensure their compensation systems reinforce the right to equal pay for work of equal value.

WE WON PROTECTIONS FROM VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

When workers organize together, we can protect workers from violence and harassment and lift everyone up.

So we organized together to demand that the federal government live up to its commitments and finally ratify and implement ILO Convention no. 190 (C-190) on Violence and Harassment.

And we won, when in January 2023, Canada did iust that.

C-190 is the first global treaty that acknowledges the universal right to a world of work free from violence and harassment, and establishes a clear framework for ending it. Once ratified, governments are accountable for preventing and addressing all forms of violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment, and it gives unions the tools they need to make work safer for everyone.



in ten workers experience some form of harassment and violence, with women and equity-deserving workers experiencing higher rates and deeper impacts on their jobs, their health, and their wellbeing.

So we celebrated the ratification of C-190 because this action not only sends a powerful signal that Canadians believe everyone deserves to work free from violence and harassment – it gives governments, unions and employers a roadmap for preventing it, addressing it, and one day eliminating it. But we recognize, thanks to our survey, that harassment and violence continues to be a significant challenge for many workers, and the status quo won't cut it.

Convention 190 is ground-breaking and visionary, but also practical and actionable. It recognizes that everyone in the world of work - governments, employers, unions and individual workers - have a role to play to provide and sustain a work culture that is based on mutual respect and the dignity of everyone.

C-190 is a comprehensive instrument. It's inclusive in how it defines who is protected and what work situations are covered, it highlights the need for gender-responsive approaches, and it requires that violence and harassment involving third parties – whether they are clients, customers, patients or members of the public – be considered and addressed.

For workers whose jobs involve dealing with the public and in public space, this recognition is extremely important. Our survey revealed that third parties are the most common form of perpetrators of harassment and violence. Yet many workplaces are ill-equipped to prevent it, and workers have very little confidence in reporting processes.

When workers organize together, we can make work safe for everyone. So today, we are celebrating this win and organizing to ensure we realize the promise and potential of C-190 by developing a strong plan to implement it in every jurisdiction.

WE WON PROTECTIONS FOR WORKERS' PENSIONS

When workers organize together, we can protect our pensions and lift everyone up by providing financial security and peace of mind to millions of families.

So we are celebrating a hard-fought victory that does just that – the implementation of Bill C-228, the *Pension Protection Act*.

We all want financial security for ourselves and our families when we retire. We give our all and spend decades dedicating our time and energy to our employers. When we retire, we depend on our hard-earned pensions to provide financial security after a lifetime of work.

But when companies restructure or go bankrupt, we have too often seen workers being forced to wait at the back of the line, where they stand to lose everything they worked for their entire life.

And instead of paying out workers' pensions, too many companies have paid out creditors and handed out bonuses to executives and shareholders, leaving thousands of workers facing poverty in retirement. We know that workplace pensions are not gifts from the employer. Defined benefit pensions are deferred wages. They are earned and paid for by workers. Next to their homes, pension savings are one of the most important pools of assets that workers accumulate over their lifetimes.

So we organized to change federal pension and insolvency laws, and we won.

After months of scrutinizing and several debates in Parliament, our elected officials finally agreed that it was time to put workers and pensioners before big banks and CEOs – something Canada's unions have demanded for decades – and passed Bill C-228 (Pension Protection Act) unanimously.

The bill would amend the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act and the Pension Benefits Standards Act, ensuring workers' and retirees' pensions receive super-priority status in bankruptcy and insolvency cases.

After improvements in the House, Bill C-228 passed the Senate Banking Committee unamended. And while senators debated Bill C-228, we organized, urging them to act quickly and pass it into law. Our ask to senators was simple: pass Bill C-228 into law without further delay.

We organized together, leveraged our power, and won, when on April 18, 2023, the Senate finally passed the *Pension Protection Act* into law. And today, workers and pensioners finally come first when companies restructure or go bankrupt.

WE WON STRONGER EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FOR WORKERS

When workers organize together, we can win the support workers need when they find themselves without work.

And through the pandemic, workers proved that again and again. The crisis forced reforms to unemployment benefits that we've been fighting for years. And while many of those desperately needed improvements have been clawed back, we have proven they work, and we've made important strides forward.



We organized together and won an extension of Employment Insurance (EI) sickness benefits from 15 to 26 weeks – that was brought into force in December 2022.

Budget 2023 also extended a five-week pilot for seasonal workers until October 2024, and found \$5.4 million over three years to ensure the El Work-Sharing Program is available to employers and unions that want to access it.

We've also seen the introduction of Bill C-37, legislation that will restore a tripartite appeal system giving workers and employers a seat at the table, something we've been fighting to restore for over a decade.

But we have so much more to do. So we will organize together, we will demand better, and we will win.

The pandemic exposed the corrosive effects of 30 years of cuts to the EI program. By March 2020, the situation was so dire that the EI program had to be paused while heroic public service workers rushed to improvise with an emergency income support system – practically overnight.

What workers achieved in weeks proved that what we've been demanding for decades works.

been demanding for decades works.
Pandemic reforms ended restrictions that had for years prevented jobless workers from gaining access to unemployment benefits. For the first time ever, decent, accessible unemployment benefits were accessible to workers who needed them – especially for many part-time, casual, contract, self-employed and other vulnerable workers.
But after consultations dragged on for far too long, the government returned EI to its pre-COVID state. Combatting labour shortages and scaling back government spending were now the priority, not repairing gaping holes in the EI safety net.
Mere weeks after getting re-elected in September 2021, the Liberal government announced the end of the Canada Recovery Benefit, and the hastily design

And as the EI program was brought back into operation, the rules governing access were simplified, disqualification rules were eased, and administrative processing sped up as a result of relaxing rules clawing back workers' severance and termination benefits.

Now, instead of forcing workers to scrape together 700 hours of work, with 64 different eligibility rules across the country, laid-off workers everywhere faced a single 420-hour threshold to qualify.

- it. Workers who would have been disqualified because they didn't have a 'valid' reason for losing their job were also given a second chance. If they were legitimately laid off from a job, they could include previous earnings and hours of work in their claim, regardless of why they parted ways with their previous employers. Laid-off workers no longer had their El benefits clawed back if they were paid severance benefits or lump-sum vacation pay with their pink slip.
- Workers had organized together and won a taste of
 what we'd been fighting for for years an accessible,
 adequate and inclusive El program.

We also forced politicians from all parties to agree: reforming El was essential, and those reforms needed to include gig workers and the self-employed.

Mere weeks after getting re-elected in September 2021, the Liberal government announced the end of the Canada Recovery Benefit, and the hastily designed Canada Worker Lockdown Benefit wasn't enough to cope with the latest wave of COVID infections, forcing a quick rewrite of the regulations. In its spring 2022 budget, the Liberal government ended temporary El measures, promising, but not delivering, on urgently needed permanent improvements.

The pandemic showed us that the reforms we've been fighting for for years are effective and do lift everyone up. So we will keep organizing together to win the reforms we've proven are possible, effective, and can be implemented quickly.

WE'VE WON COMMITMENTS ON ANTI-SCAB LEGISLATION

We know that when employers use scab labour to pit workers against each other, it hurts everyone, turning routine, typically short-lived stoppages into drawn-out, desperate and destructive conflicts. Workers can end up losing their jobs, their homes, and sometimes their unions. Disputes become dug-in and embittered, creating losers on all sides.

We also know that allowing employers to use scab labour can rip apart communities and cost lives. We remember the devastating consequences of a decision by Bridgestone/Firestone Tire to use one of the largest deployments of scabs in US history. Economist Alan Krueger and his colleague determined that the 271 fatalities and more than 800 injuries caused by defective tires were "partly the product of under-trained and poorly supervised scab workers, but also the 'brutal' post-strike working conditions in which scabs and union members were forced to work side by side before the collective agreement dispute was finally settled."

So we organized together, and we demanded the federal government build on the positive example already set by Québec and British Columbia and pass anti-scab legislation for the federally regulated private sector. This would help restore balance to labour relations for one million workers and 22,000 employers in the sector.

And we won, securing a commitment to table anti-scab legislation.

Today, we are organizing to make sure that legislation is passed into law quickly, and that it is robust, with strong compliance and enforcement mechanisms. We are demanding that it define replacement workers broadly, to include new employees, management, workers from other bargaining units and locations, contractors, and volunteers, outside workers, and the public.

We are demanding that struck work includes remote work and that workers have the right to refuse struck work and are protected from reprisal. And we will ensure that when work is deemed "essential" because of an immediate and serious danger to public health and safety, that the work can only be done by bargaining unit members, not scabs or managers. And finally, we will make sure that the *Canada Labour Code* prohibits unionized workers from working when their bargaining unit is on strike or locked out.

We will fight for and win improvements to the *Canada Labour Code* too, ensuring stronger reinstatement rights, arbitration after discipline or discharge during a strike, and the right to apply for interest arbitration in a protracted strike.

When workers organize together, we can lift everyone up by restoring balance to labour relations and protecting workers and their communities.

Being part of a union and having a collective agreement means stability, predictability and better conditions for workers.

WE MADE UNION ORGANIZING EASIER

We know that being forced to repeatedly demonstrate support for a union just gives bosses more time to retaliate to try to get workers to back down.

So we are celebrating British Columbia's move to restore card check certification.

For decades, governments have moved to ban automatic certification, even in cases where 100 percent of the workers in a bargaining unit demonstrated their support by signing union cards. Workers are at the centre of the crisis, and want to be at the centre of the solution. So we are organizing together to tackle the climate crisis head-on and lift everyone up by creating good quality, sustainable jobs.

These moves have coincided with a troubling decline in unionization rates. This is because employers routinely pressure workers not to join a union, threatening to close the business, lay-off employees or withhold promotions and other opportunities.

Showing support for a union by signing a membership card is democratic, and if there's majority support, there's no reason workers should be forced to repeat the process and give employers more time to try to pressure them to change their minds.

We know that having the support of a union and a collective voice in the workplace leads to better health and safety, higher morale and less employee turnover. Being part of a union and having a collective agreement means stability, predictability and better conditions for workers. It also strengthens our communities and benefits our economy.

So we will organize together to urge all provincial governments across the country to follow British Columbia's lead and pass laws that make the process fairer for workers.

WE ARE TACKLING THE CLIMATE CRISIS BY DEMANDING SUSTAINABLE JOB

Workers refuse to stand by while our communities and livelihoods are ravaged by extreme drought, wildfires, storms, flooding, heat waves, rising sea levels, melting glaciers and warming oceans.

Workers in the high-carbon industries that have fueled Canada's economy for generations know our economy must transition and they want to lead. That's why we have organized and demanded the large-scale creation of sustainable, quality jobs. Jobs with clear pathways to them that will ensure workers, including women, Indigenous peoples, racialized people, and other equity-seeking groups, and their communities survive and thrive.

And over the last two years we've delivered, the government's interim Sustainable Jobs Plan lays out commitments to job quality, social dialogue and social protections. The plan commits to creating a Sustainable Jobs Secretariat and partnership council that will invest \$250 million in the Sustainable Jobs Training Centre and the Union Training and Innovation Program to help equip workers with the skills they need to meet the challenge of transition.

We successfully advocated that the federal government impose labour requirements for companies to take full advantage of the Clean Technology and Clean Hydrogen investment tax credits – a first in Canadian history.

This means that starting this October, in order to take advantage of the highest tax credit rates, businesses must pay equal to the wages, benefits, and pensions workers have won in their most recent collective agreement, or the corresponding project labour agreements in the jurisdiction where they work.

We also demanded and won a requirement that at least ten percent of the tradesperson hours worked must be performed by registered apprentices in the Red Seal trades. The government has also committed to applying the same labour requirements related to the prevailing wage and hours worked by registered apprentices to the Investment Tax Credit for Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage, and the Investment Tax Credit for Clean Electricity.

The government has also committed to having workers at the table as part of the decision-making process as the world of work changes. This worker-centred approach and these investments in sustainable jobs and training are vital to ensuring Canada meets its climate goals and helps workers transition to good-quality, low carbon jobs.

We will continue to organize together to demand the real-dollar investments we need as governments build Canada's sustainable economy pathways, and the good union jobs these will create.

Done right, we believe this can increase the number of good, union jobs in the energy sector and throughout the Canadian economy. But we know it will take hard work, and that we must continue to organize together to ensure the government delivers on their commitments to create good jobs.

WE WON AN EXPANSION OF UNION TRAINING FUNDING

We have long advocated for federal guidance and investment in the training workers need to gain access to economic opportunities they need. Over the last two years, we have secured hundreds of millions of dollars to expand the training funding workers rely on.

The 2022 fall economic update committed \$250 million in new spending to enhance union training, including an expansion of the Union Training and Innovation Program. This expansion ensures that union-led training continues to grow, ensuring that workers, and not profits, are at the heart of education workers need.

These investments coupled with the Budget 2021 commitment of \$2.5 billion in skills and training – which will create 500,000 training and work experience opportunities for young and core-age workers over five years – dramatically increased the opportunities for workers to adapt to a changing job market.

We organized together, creating opportunities for hundred of thousands of workers to access the training they need, lifting everyone up.

WE'VE MADE HOUSING MORE AFFORDABLE

Over the last two years, we've organized together and we've made housing more affordable, lifting everyone up.

We organized together and demanded ambitious and direct funding for the construction of new, non-market, affordable public housing, including social housing and co-ops for all, including Indigenous peoples, survivors of domestic violence, and people living with disabilities – particularly for marginalized groups.

We also demanded that the government combat financial speculation in housing, starting with taxing house-flipping and vacant properties to capture windfall real estate gains that go to the wealthiest Canadians.

We organized, we demanded better, and we delivered. In its 2022 Federal Budget, the government committed almost \$10 billion over five years to housing, including \$4 billion over five years for a Housing Accelerator Fund designed to expand supply. That fund is helping to create 100,000 net new housing units, including affordable housing units, over five years.

The 2022 Budget also included a commitment to \$1.5 billion over two years starting in 2022 for the Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation to extend the Rapid Housing Initiative. This initiative helped supply 6,000 new affordable housing units, a quarter of which fund women-focused housing projects.

We also fought for, and won, nearly \$3 billion under the National Housing Co-Investment Fund to accelerate the creation of new units and repair existing ones. This will benefit over 100,000 housing units for vulnerable Canadians relying on shelters, homes for seniors and persons with disabilities, and supportive housing. \$500 million is being reallocated from the National Housing Co-Investment Fund to launch a new Cooperative Housing Development Program aimed at expanding co-op housing in Canada.

We secured an additional \$1 billion in loans – that was reallocated from the Rental Construction Financing Initiative to support co-op housing projects.

The government is reforming the Rental Construction Financing Initiative, with an emphasis on strengthening affordability and energy efficiency requirements. As promised in the confidence-and-supply agreement, the government also issued a one-time \$500 payment for those facing housing affordability challenges.

The first-time home buyers' tax credit was doubled to \$10,000, and the government implemented a new tax-free first home savings account with a \$8,000 annual maximum contribution.

We also won commitments to expanding affordable housing in Canada's North, and the introduction of a multigenerational home renovation tax credit.

We organized together and we demanded investment in housing construction, and we delivered with a commitment from the government to use federal infrastructure programs to tie access to funding to actions by provinces, territories and municipalities to increase housing construction. The government is also working toward a home buyers' bill of rights, including a plan to end blind bidding and enshrining the right to a home inspection.

In place of immediate measures to end housing speculation, the government committed to undertake a review of housing as an asset class and is looking at potential changes to the tax treatment of firms that invest in residential real estate.

It has also imposed new restrictions on foreign investors and foreign citizens who are not Canadian citizens or permanent residents from acquiring residential property in Canada for a period of two years. And we saw another victory with the adoption of new rules to ensure profits from flipping properties are fully taxed. Any person who sells a property they have held for less than 12 months would be considered to be flipping the property for profit, and would be subject to full taxation on profits as business income.

The government also introduced exemptions for Canadians selling their home due to 'life circumstances'. This measure will apply to residential properties sold after January 1, 2023. Finally, the government will also properly tax assignment sales.

- We continued to deliver in 2023, when the government launched a new tax-free first home savings account allowing individuals to save \$40,000 on a tax-free basis. Like an RRSP, contributions will be tax-deductible and withdrawals to purchase a first home will be non-taxable like a TFSA.
- We also won new protections for Canadians with mortgages who are facing exceptional circumstances. These will ensure banks and mortgage lenders provide fair and equitable access to relief measures where needed, by extending amortizations, adjusting payment schedules, or authorizing lump-sum payments.

We organized together and we delivered, making housing more affordable and lifting everyone up.



Advancing Human Rights

WE WON A REVIEW OF THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT

When workers organize together, we can build equity in the workplace and lift everyone up.

For decades, Canada's unions have been calling for a review of the federal *Pay Equity Act* so that it reflects today's reality for marginalized workers that continue to be excluded from or discriminated against in the workplace.

That's why we fought for and won a review of the federal *Employment Equity Act* and are organizing together now to ensure it truly advances workplace equality and addresses the underrepresentation of historically disadvantaged equity-seeking groups in federally regulated workplaces.

In 2021, when the federal government finally struck an Employment Equity Task Force in order to conduct the long-overdue review of the Act, we organized strategic meetings with the Employment Equity Working Group to determine common priorities and recommendations, circulated a briefing note in advance of the task force meetings, and debriefed following these discussions.

We met with members of the Task Force in March and submitted our recommendations, including adding 2SLGBTQI+ workers as a designated group, a strengthened role for bargaining agents, as well as improved accountability, monitoring and reporting measures.

And now, as we wait for the Task Force report, we will continue to organize together to ensure that the Act is updated to include all of our recommendations.

WE WON A NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

For the past three decades, during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, individuals and groups around the world have called for the prevention and elimination of all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls.

Here in Canada, our CLC survey exposed the unnerving reality that gender-based harassment and violence remain a persistent threat to workers, and that third-party violence (from customers, clients, patients and others) accounts for one in three of these incidents. It highlighted a particular threat to women and gender-diverse workers who are more frequently employed in public-facing jobs.

That's why workers have organized together, demanded, and won a National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence (NAP).

With our allies in feminist and gender-based violence movements, we have been calling for a NAP since 2013. In 2021, we were hopeful when the federal, provincial and territorial ministers issued a joint declaration committing to developing such a plan.

But we kept organizing together to ensure that promise became reality. We worked with our allies and experts to develop and release a roadmap for the promised NAP, and in November 2022, we welcomed the release of a NAP framework by ministers. While the framework fell far short of expectations, the work is just beginning as bilateral agreements between the federal government and their provincial and territorial counterparts are being negotiated.

Today, our message to governments is clear: the NAP must include specific strategies to address gender-based violence and harassment in the world of work, and these must be guided by ILO C-190, ratified by Canada this year.



WE WON A BAN ON CONVERSION THERAPY

When workers organize, we can stand up to hate and lift everyone up.

We know that 2SLGBTQI+ people are facing a rising tide of hatred, discrimination and violence, and that impacts access to health care, housing and employment. Our national survey on harassment and violence found that 73 percent of gender-diverse respondents reported having experienced sexual harassment and violence at work.

So we celebrated when a ban on conversion therapy became law, ending the coercive and harmful practice that has been denounced by medical, health, and human rights organizations everywhere.

And, after years of activism and pressure from unions, 2SLGBTQI+ and human rights advocates, we also won progress on ending the discriminatory blood donation policy.

Now, we are organizing together to continue the fight against hate. We are sounding the alarm regarding the rising tide of hate against 2SLTBTQI+ people and communities, joining solidarity efforts to protect Drag Queen Storytime in communities and libraries, and fighting for inclusive curriculums in schools across Canada.

WE WON SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES

People with disabilities continue to face significantly higher costs of living and struggle to cover the cost of basic necessities including specialized equipment, prescriptions not covered by health insurance plans, and accessible housing retrofits.

These extra expenses are a key reason so many people with disabilities live in poverty.

We know that people living with disabilities face the greatest employment barriers and the highest rates of poverty.

That's why we are organizing together with our allies in the disability rights movement to advocate for better income supports, to remove barriers to employment, and to win accessibility and inclusion for all people living with disabilities.

In 2022, the federal government announced the first Disability Inclusion Action Plan, which includes a commitment to implement an employment strategy for persons with disabilities and introduce a new Canada Disability Benefit.

We applauded the introduction of legislation to create the new benefit in 2022, and now we are organizing together with our allies to urge parliamentarians and senators to fast track the bill.

Once adopted, the Canada Disability Benefit bill – or Bill C-22 – will provide a floor for adequate income support for people with disabilities in Canada, who represent close to 40 percent of working age people in our country. This will be Canada's first ever federal guaranteed monthly income supplement for people living with disabilities. Today, workers are organizing together to win more fairness and inclusion for workers with disabilities, launching the <u>"Doing Things Differently: A Disability</u> <u>Rights At Work Handbook"</u> as an important resource.

We also mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities each December 3rd by recognizing the achievements of worker heroes who have organized to champion and win disabilities rights. The Carol McGregor Disability Rights Award is named in honour of an outstanding disability rights activist, member of BCGEU/NUPGE and the CLC Disability Rights Working Group, who was much loved by all those who worked with her. Carol passed away in 2006.

On the award's tenth anniversary in 2021, we celebrated the work of Sheryl Burns, President of CUPE Local 1936, representing social service workers throughout British Columbia's Lower Mainland. Sheryl's fierce advocacy ensures the duty to accommodate is enforced for members who are permanently or temporarily disabled. And in 2022 we celebrated the accomplishments of another worker hero, CUPE Local 1294 activist Sylvain Le May, recognizing his more than 17 years of disability rights advocacy in Québec's post-secondary education sector.

WE WORKED TO LIFT UP TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION AND INDIGENOUS JUSTICE

The horrific discoveries of the remains of so many Indigenous children in mass and unmarked burial sites at former residential schools is a shattering consequence of Canada's colonial actions. But we must remember this isn't just about the past - Indigenous communities continue to face violence, oppression and systemic discrimination today.

So, we must organize together to acknowledge this truth and take action against it.

In June 2021 we welcomed the creation of a new statutory holiday - the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, known by many as Orange Shirt Day - to be recognized on September 30 each year. Workers have been organizing in support of the call for this day since our first Indigenous Lobby Day in 2019. To help workers make the most of this day and contribute to making change, we organized events and created an Indigenous Rights and Justice Resource Centre online, with resources to support individual, workplace and collective action towards reconciliation.

We celebrated the passage of Bill C-15, an Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The Bill requires the federal government, in consultation and co-operation with Indigenous peoples, to ensure Canada's laws are consistent with the Declaration, to prepare and implement an action plan to achieve the objectives of UNDRIP within three years, and to report on progress.

Both the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls implore our government to fully adopt and implement UNDRIP as the framework for reconciliation and justice for Indigenous peoples, including Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit persons who continue to face the brunt of the legacy of colonial violence.

WE'VE ORGANIZED TOGETHER TO CHALLENGE RACISM

When workers organize together, we can challenge racism and make our movement more inclusive. lifting everyone up.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on racialized workers and communities and has also fueled increasingly vocal and emboldened racist attitudes.

So, we have organized together to challenge racism, including anti-Black racism, anti-asian racism, Islamophobia and anti-semitism, to lift up workers in all their diversity and to fight for justice in our workplaces and communities.

The so-called Freedom Convoy was a clear demonstration of the growing influence of hate movements in Canada and the need for decisive action to counter hatred with solidarity and a redoubled commitment to equity and social justice.

In 2022, the federal government announced plans recognize that while we've made a lot of progress, we to develop a renewed Anti-Racism Strategy and a have much more to do to dismantle racism. discrimination National Action Plan on Combatting Hate to address and hate in all its forms. the troubling rise of hate crimes and hate groups in So together, we will organize to take this on and continue Canada. We welcomed this announcement and submitted fighting for change. our recommendations to government, which included a comprehensive legislative review of the Canadian Human Rights Act as part of an overall modernization of how the government deals with hate in all its forms, including online. We urged the government to work with community organizations working to combat hate, as well as provincial and territorial governments, to develop ways to educate the public about both online and offline hate.

> While we've made a lot of progress, we have **much** more to do to dismantle racism, discrimination and hate in all its forms.

We know that hate crimes and incidents of hate are often reported to civil society and community organizations instead of law enforcement. So, we called on Justice Canada to develop materials and best practices to address those gaps in data collection and demanded resources to support civil society and community organizations to collect that data too.

We also know that hate is flourishing in online spaces and is causing severe consequences offline. So, we worked together with our allies to push for anti-hate legislation like the federal government's proposed commitment to online safety.

We highlighted and celebrated the long history, legacy, and contributions of racialized workers to the labour movement and organized to address the systemic racism faced by these workers in Canada – that includes supporting the Black Class Action Lawsuit filed on behalf of Black federal employees in Canada.

On the 25th anniversary of the release of the CLC's National Anti-Racism Task Force Report, we celebrated 25 years of union activism against racism. Although we

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CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS



Solidarity Across Borders

WE'VE FOUGHT FOR WORKERS' RIGHTS AROUND THE WORLD

When workers organize together, we can improve workers' rights around the world and lift everyone up.

So we have organized together with our allies in the United States and Mexico to win stronger labour protections through the Canada-United-States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA). And we have delivered winning provisions that have the potential to lift up fundamental workers' rights across the continent.

Under NAFTA, corporations were incentivized to relocate to locations – especially in Mexico – where they could profit from poor working conditions and low-wage labour. Workers organized together – across borders – to ensure that CUSMA includes a more worker-centred labour chapter and a Facility-Specific Rapid Response Labor Mechanism that support efforts to organize, bargain collective agreements and stop workers' rights violations.

But we know that if we want to realize the potential offered by these mechanisms, we need to keep organizing together to hold governments accountable, and to ensure they file the complaints that will hold violators accountable.

We've also made significant progress on lifting up workers' rights in the South. For the first time ever, the federal government is finally indicating that preferential tariff rates for imports from "least developed" and "developing" countries like Bangladesh will be tied to requirements and adherence to international standards on human rights and labour conditions. We will be monitoring progress to ensure our government follows through on this promise.

We are also continuing our fight to eradicate forced labour from Canadian supply chains. In its 2023 Federal Budget, the government committed to introducing legislation by 2024 to strengthen the import ban on goods produced using forced labour.

This commitment is an important step forward, but we've seen these promises before and we still have forced labour, child labour and other labour violations in our supply chains. We were reminded of the imperative to win this fight as we marked the grim ten-year anniversary of the Rana Plaza garment factory collapse in Bangladesh on April 24 and mourned the loss of the more than 1,100 workers who were killed. Over 2,500 workers and their families continue to live with the aftermath of serious injuries sustained in one of the world's worst industrial disasters.

- Workers organized together and demanded Canada
 pass mandatory human rights due diligence legislation
 that requires Canadian companies, and companies that
 import goods into Canada, to respect human rights
 throughout their supply chains.
- We are also demanding our government promote and protect the right to organize and bargain collectively as key enabling rights, without which decent work
 cannot take place, and that trade preferences be made dependent on the respect for workers' right to organize.

Workers are also organizing to hold Canadian clothing brands accountable. That means demanding they sign the International Accord for Health and Safety in the Textile and Garment Industry, the continuation of the Bangladesh Accord on Building and Fire Safety, which brought massive success in health and safety inspections and repairs to thousands of factories. When the Accord expires, it should be renewed as a legally binding, enforceable agreement, expanded to more countries for the long-term.

We have also demanded that brands help end the race to the bottom borne by workers by providing living wages and living wage compensation for workers suffering injury or death in the workplace across their supply chains.

In addition, we've called on brands to take responsibility for financing a permanent Employment Injury Scheme in Bangladesh to compensate workers injured at work.

WE'RE DEMANDING CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY

When workers organize together, we can hold corporations accountable for their abuses around the world and lift everyone up.

We know that we cannot rely on voluntary measures to curb corporate abuse. So we have organized with our allies at the Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability to push for legislation that would hold Canadian companies accountable for their role in human rights abuses and environmental damage around the world.

Together, we drafted corporate accountability legislation for Canada that builds on the positive examples from other countries around the world. More than 150 organizations and unions that work with people impacted by the activities of Canadian companies in 32 countries around the world endorsed what we proposed.

We worked in Parliament to see a private Member's bill based on our model due diligence legislation introduced in Parliament in March 2022: Bill C-262, "Corporate Responsibility to Protect Human Rights Act."

And we will keep organizing together to see this legislation passed into law, so that Canadian companies will finally face consequences for failing to prevent human rights abuses and environmental harm, and be compelled to conduct due diligence and publicly report on the preventative steps they've taken.

WE'VE WON STRONGER HEALTH AND SAFETY FOR WORKERS EVERYWHERE

Every year, more than three million workers die and tens of millions more get sick or injured because of their work and workplaces. The global pandemic made it even more evident that too many workers are forced to choose between their health and their livelihood.

But after organizing together for more than three years, workers around the world have delivered a critical victory that will finally begin to change that.

A June 2022 decision at the International Labour Conference (ILC) is finally recognizing occupational health and safety as the fifth fundamental principle and right at work.

The change by the ILC – the UN parliament for workplace issues – is the first extension of workers' fundamental human rights in a quarter of a century.

The right to a healthy and safe working environment will add to the four rights already adopted in 1998 by the ILO including freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of forced or compulsory labour, the abolition of child labour, and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

These are now "fundamental conventions" that all ILO member countries are obligated to uphold. These conventions are also often included in trade agreements, international financing rules and global supply chain standards.

We have always organized together to mark the April 28 Day of Mourning for workers killed and injured because of work. Now we will also organize together to ensure that more countries implement all ILO health and safety conventions, to extend access to occupational health services, universal sick pay from day one, more powers for union workplace safety reps, and more joint safety committees.

WE'VE PROVIDED EMERGENCY SUPPORT TO WORKERS WORLDWIDE

When workers organize together, we can be there for each other during a crisis, and help lift everyone up.

That's why since 2021, we've organized together to leverage our International Activities Fund to support workers organized to support their communities in crisis.

We responded to the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)'s solidarity appeal for Ukraine with a total of \$50,000 in support of ITUC Ukrainian member organizations FPU and KVPU to provide food and water provisions, medical supplies and hygiene items to families in desperate need of assistance. That also helped to support trade unionsin neighbouring countries working to assist refugees, including in Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Moldova.

Canada's unions contributed a total of \$12,500 to the Federation of Somali Trade Unions for their support of victims of a devastating fire that swept through the Waheen Market in April 2022, destroying thousands of businesses, jobs and livelihoods and causing long term economic damage to the nation. It was the largest market in Somaliland, and the fourth largest in the Horn of Africa. FETSU provided urgent solidarity and assistance to workers and families to rebuild their livelihoods.

When Oxfam reached out with an appeal to support famine relief initiatives in the Horn of Africa, Canada's unions stepped up with \$5,000 to help provide emergency food packages, cash transfers, clean water, sanitation and hygiene kits to people affected by the crisis in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan.



We extended solidarity to the Indian Academy for Self Employed Women in India with a contribution of \$5,000 to help provide technical resources to support programs on capacity building, research, vocational training, literacy, skills training and development communication for women workers. This will help improve access for women in poor communities that were heavily impacted by COVID-related job losses and mobility restrictions.

We also provided \$5,000 in response to an appeal from the Red Cross to support the Pakistan Red Crescent response to floods including evacuations, providing health care, and delivering humanitarian aid.

Canada's unions also provided \$5,000 in support of an ITUC appeal for Myanmar after the 2021 military coup. This supported workers and trade unionists organizing labour strikes and protests and online campaigns within Myanmar and internationally to call for sanctions on the military junta and recognition of the National Unity Government.

We supported Haitian trade unions with \$5,000 to support their reconstruction response to the impacts of the tropical storm and earthquake which devastated the south of the country.

We also contributed \$5,000 through the Red Cross
 working in Türkiye and Syria to support emergency
 assistance for survivors of the devastating earthquake
 in February 2023.



Building Our Movement

WE HELPED BUILD OUR MOVEMENT WITH EDUCATION

Over the last two years, we've helped build our movement with education initiatives including our ever popular CLC Regional Schools and workshops serving more than 2000 workers from 29 different unions.

This year we celebrated the 60th Anniversary of the integrate online learning into labour education and Labour College of Canada (LCC), which continues to be address these concerns. a catalyst for leadership in Canada's labour and social We continue to support affiliates interested in adding justice movements, delivering in-depth, university level asynchronous online learning, in addition to synchronous courses on workplace and workers' rights issues in Canada. Graduates leave with the skills and knowledge Zoom/Teams web-conferencing, to their courses with they need to advocate for workers and excel as our Online Learning Hub. We are also providing CLCdesigned courses and affiliate educators to organizers, union leaders. course designers and facilitators, labour council Close to 60 graduates have joined the LCC alumni since executives and activists.

Close to 60 graduates have joined the LCC alumni since the last convention and an equal number are in the program now. To date, 21 affiliates, including several of their components and locals, have participated by sending students or attending LCC board meetings and working group sessions.

Because the LCC had previously offered online and blended learning, we were ready to organize and pivot to continue providing the leadership-oriented certificate program during the pandemic. Since the return to in-person classes, we've continued to offer the certificate program both in-person and online.

LCC Certificate program graduates have shared their appreciation for the unique programming and extremely important opportunities the college provides for critical exchange among leaders from a range of unions across the country. And partnership agreements with Brock and Athabasca Universities make it easier for LCC graduates to apply their diploma credits towards further studies in labour.

In 2021, we learned more about the barriers and concerns associated with the transition to online and blended learning thanks to CLC research. In particular, we learned about impacts on accessibility, especially for workers who are racialized, Indigenous, gender-diverse, 2SLGBTQI+, under 30, and who live with a disability. We organized together with the CLC's Education Advisory Committee to exchange information about how to integrate online learning into labour education and address these concerns.

An Online Course Catalogue resource has been added to the Online Learning Hub, allowing union educators to share materials for future online education design and delivery. Content includes course materials for synchronous and asynchronous course delivery and webinar recordings for delivering online labour education.

We've also organized together to offer new workshops, courses and resources and have responded to requests for facilitation, education design and course materials. New workshops address new ways of engaging a diversity of members and innovative approaches to ensuring that unions are welcoming for everyone.

Our workshops with an engagement and equity lens include the "Bridging Solidarity in Polarizing Times," a two-part workshop to help unions navigate courageous conversations and reduce divisions during the weeks-long trucker occupation. We also offered a 40-minute presentation on the Freedom Convoy and the Rise of Hate.

Our "Building a Culture of Consent" workshop is designed to deepen awareness around harassment, including sexual harassment. And our "Making Connections: Truth Reconciliation and Land Acknowledgments" workshop offers an online learning experience around the important connection to land and land acknowledgments as part of a meaningful journey of reconciliation. We also offered a Member Engagement & Organizing School, a three-part workshop offered in partnership with Toronto Metropolitan University's Institute for Change Leaders, delivered over four online sessions in August and September. More than 200 people attended workshops on organizing and engaging members, recruiting, and working with volunteers, introduction to canvassing and practice using digital organizing tools.

The ever-popular CLC Member Engagement/Member Action course continues to be offered, facilitating learning based on the Go, Listen and Build model – this now also includes a digital organizing component.

Our "Pronouns: Fostering Inclusive Unions, Workplaces and Communities" course is an introductory level workshop on why gender pronouns are important, how to use them, and how they can help foster inclusive unions, workplaces, and communities.

We continued to provide our catalogue and resource centres, including the Mental Health Resource Centre with updates added during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We worked with WE Consulting to offer a condensed online version of the popular Pacific Winter School weeklong course on benefit bargaining. This course teaches how benefits plans are structured, managed and financed, what to watch for when employers seek to change benefits providers and provisions, and how to go into bargaining equipped to both defend and improve benefits for union members.

Our Labour Council Online Financial Reporting online course provides training for labour council secretary-treasurers on the use of the CLC's online financial reporting system, used by labour councils to submit monthly financial reports to the CLC.

And we also offered webinars and online trainings, hosting three webinars since the last convention and online trainings on Human Rights and Equity, Political Action and Campaigns and Labour's Economic Recovery Plan. Recorded webinars continue to be useful resources for ongoing education and learning.

WE USED INNOVATIVE **DIGITAL ORGANIZING TO** LIFT EVERYONE UP

When workers organize together, we lift everyone up. And over the last two years, we've supported that organizing with national campaigns made even more effective with a strong focus on digital outreach and engagement.

We've grown our movement, engaged new members and supporters, influenced public opinion, and delivered solutions for all workers by using innovative online strategies and tools to add to the power of face-to-face organizing.

We've continued to lead on effective online union organizing and advocacy by formally partnering with Action Network. Created by the AFL-CIO, Action Network is the world's best progressive online organizing platform, and a powerful tool for membership engagement and organizing and advocacy campaigns.

Together, we're working to ensure that progressive organizations at all levels in Canada - from the grassroots on up - have access to the robust campaign, email, mobile messaging, and organizing tools they need to keep lifting everyone up. We are incorporating best practices and the lessons learned by Canadian organizers and digital practitioners into the Action Network toolset, benefiting the progressive movement as a whole. Importantly, the Congress is also adding translation to the entire toolset - making it the first bilingual (French/English) digital toolset database software system.



and support mobilization efforts. Already, more than 50 labour councils and federations of labour are actively using the program.

We are also supporting affiliates at all levels now using Action Network as their primary engagement tool, providing strategic support during the evaluation and onboarding phase and capacity building to support skill development and technical support during and after the toolset migration. The bilingual administration panel development is nearly complete, so we are also developing a French language training curriculum to support toolset on-boarding in French.

The Congress is committed to creating an environment that fosters advanced strategic and technical digital literacy for all affiliates and labour bodies. So we are working to deliver and support effective on-boarding processes to support transition to the Action Network toolset and expanding on a series of trainings to develop digital organizing skills. This includes in-person, technical training sessions and monthly virtual technical training sessions for those migrating to Action Network. Our new course, Introduction to Digital Organizing, is building digital literacy at all levels in the labour movement, and has already been offered in five provinces to hundreds of students.

LIFTING EVERYONE UP

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Pauline Worsfold Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions

VACANT Young Workers representative

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ACFO Association of Canadian Financial Officers

ACPA Air Canada Pilots Association

ACTRA Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists

AFM/CFM Canadian Federation of Musicians

ALPA Air Line Pilots Association, International-Canada Board Office

ATU Amalgamated Transit Union

BAC International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers

BCTF British Columbia Teachers' Federation

BCTGM Bakery, Confectionery and Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union

CAPE Canadian Association of Professional Employees

CFNU Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions

COPE Canadian Office and Professional Employees' Union

CPAA Canadian Postmasters and Assistants Association

CUPE Canadian Union of Public Employees

CUPW Canadian Union of Postal Workers **CURC** Congress of Union Retirees of Canada

CWA Canada Communications Workers of America, Canada

DGC Directors Guild of Canada

ETFO *Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario*

FTQ-Construction

IABSORIW International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers

IAFF International Association of Fire Fighters

IAHFIAW International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers

IAM&AW International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

IATSE Int'l Alliance of Theatrical Stage Empl., Moving Picture Tech., Artists and Allied Crafts of the US, its Territories & Canada

IBB International Brotherhood of Boilermakers Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers and Helpers

IBEW International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

IFPTE International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers

ILA International Longshoremen's Association

ILWU International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada **IUOE** International Union of Operating Engineers

IUPAT International Union of Painters and Allied Trades

LiUNA Laborers' International Union of North America

NUCAUT National Union of the Canadian Association of University Teachers

NUPGE National Union of Public and General Employees

OECTA Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association

OPEIU Office and Professional Employees International Union

OSSTF Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation

PIPSC The Professional Institute of Public Service of Canada

PSAC Public Service Alliance of Canada

SEIU Service Employees International Union

SGWBC Shipyard General Workers' Federation of British Columbia

SIU Seafarers' International Union of Canada

SMART International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers

UA United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada

UAW International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America

UFCW United Food and Commercial Workers International Union

UMWA United Mine Workers of America

UNITE HERE!

USW

United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied-Industrial and Service Workers International Union

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