



To: All Paramedic Locals

February 11, 2008

## **The Right to Retire at 60 with Full Pension**

Last fall, the Sponsors Corporation of OMERS took an ill-advised vote against proposed changes to the OMERS pension plan to allow paramedics the same pension rights as police and firefighters. Had the vote passed, these changes would simply allow union locals representing paramedics to have the right to negotiate a normal retirement age of 60 (NRA 60) with full pension.

This inequity must be addressed. A joint labour initiative with CAW, CUPE Ontario, OPSEU and SEIU is underway to reverse the Sponsors Corporation decision. Working with our respective members, we are planning a series of joint meetings with union members to launch a province-wide campaign.

The campaign objective is to put pressure on Sponsors Corporation members, including the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), *by garnering the support of local municipalities*. We anticipate that the high respect that the public accords paramedics will be an important factor in winning support.

### **Equity with Police and Firefighters**

In 2005, the federal government designated paramedics as a Public Safety Occupation (PSO) alongside police and firefighters. The PSO designation provides paramedics the opportunity to negotiate pension changes that would allow them to leave the workplace earlier.

However, OMERS has not afforded paramedics the same pension rights as police and firefighter PSO occupations. The reality is that only about 4 per cent of Ontario's 5,185 paramedics are over the age of 55.

### **Participate in February/March Joint Member Meetings**

It's important that you and your members stay informed about NRA 60 and participate in local campaign events if we are to win NRA 60 will full pension for paramedics.

*Attached is a list of paramedic meetings scheduled this February and March* for all areas in Ontario. These are joint area meetings for paramedic members from respective CAW, CUPE, OPSEU and SEIU locals. Please encourage your members to attend one of these meetings.

### **Mount a Municipal Lobby Campaign in Your Area**

We are asking paramedic locals to work together to mount a lobby campaign directed at your mayor and members of council. At the February/March meetings, we will provide you with all the tools you need to mount an effective campaign such as:

- Action plan and lobby kit, including how to make a presentation to your City Council
- Brochure, draft resolution for council, draft letter of support for councils to send to AMO
- Media release and draft Letter to Editor

**Encourage your paramedic members to attend the February/March meetings!  
They deserve the same rights as police and firefighters.**