

## Attack on Charter right to free collective bargaining

More than 10,000 school board workers and teachers packed the lawn of Queen's Park in Toronto on August 27 to protest a Liberal bill that would strip education workers of their right to free collective bargaining.

Bill 115, which passed into law in mid-September, is an unprecedented piece of legislation that affects 55,000 CUPE members and other school board workers, as well as teachers across the province. It allows the province to override local bargaining and enforce terms.

"This was nothing but a cynical ploy to win a by-election," said CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn. The Liberals recalled the legislature early so that the bill would be introduced before the Kitchener-Waterloo by-election, which they needed to win in order to gain a majority government. Thanks in part to dozens of CUPE members who volunteered on the NDP campaign, the Liberals were denied that majority.



With the help of the Tories, however, the Liberals did pass Bill 115. CUPE members, working in solidarity with members of ETFO, OSSTF and other unions, have been protesting every Friday at MPP offices across the province, asking their friends and neighbours to tell their MPPs to repeal Bill 115, and working within their communities to encourage school trustees to bargain in good faith, not under the gun of Bill 115. CUPE is also challenging Bill 115 in court. In September, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA) stood alongside the presidents of CUPE Ontario and the two main teachers' unions and declared their support for a legal challenge.

"We are concerned that this bill violates the right to meaningful collective bargaining," said Sukanya Pillay, a CCLA director. She added, "People's rights are not something to be trifled with. We are concerned that this legislation goes too far and violates the civil liberties of all Ontarians."

The criticism did not stop Premier Dalton McGuinty, who followed his unconstitutional law by promising similar legislation attacking the Charter rights of nearly 500,000 more public-sector workers (see page 2).

At the end of September, school board Locals from across the province met in Toronto and passed an action plan to continue fighting for the rights of education workers. For more information on Bill 115 and what you can do, visit [cupe.on.ca/supportEducation](http://cupe.on.ca/supportEducation).

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## New Liberal bill uniting labour “like never before”

Dozens of reporters packed a meeting room at the Sheraton Hotel in Toronto on Wednesday, September 26. In front of the cameras sat leaders of Ontario’s largest public- and private-sector unions, united in their opposition to Dalton McGuinty’s new legislation attacking the right of workers to free collective bargaining.

“If nothing else, Dalton McGuinty has brought the labour movement together like never before,” said CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn. He was joined at the press conference by OFL President Sid Ryan, OPSEU President Warren “Smokey” Thomas and Jenny Ahn from the Canadian Auto Workers. Leaders of more than a dozen other unions attended in a show of solidarity.



That morning, Finance Minister Dwight Duncan delivered his latest blow to public-sector workers and the economy of Ontario. He unveiled new legislation that would strip nearly 500,000 workers of their right to free collective bargaining. The sweeping bill affects workers in universities, colleges, hospitals, boards of health, long-term care homes, CCACs, services funded by CCACs and at Hydro One. Not only does the bill remove the right to free collective bargaining, it gives a minister the power to approve or reject any contracts that do get negotiated and even gives the minister power to impose a contract.

At press time, the bill had not been introduced. CUPE Ontario has called an emergency all-locals leadership meeting for October 18 in Markham, Ontario. Members are urged to attend and to get involved, as Bill 115 and this new legislation will affect more than 700,000 Ontario workers and most CUPE members.

For more information, visit [cupe.on.ca](http://cupe.on.ca).



# URGENT

## EMERGENCY ALL-LOCALS LEADERSHIP MEETING

The Ontario Liberal government is introducing unprecedented legislation that strips nearly 500,000 workers of their right to free collective bargaining. CUPE members are encouraged to attend and get involved at this critical time in our province's history. The future for all workers is on the line.

**Thursday, October 18—10:00am to 4:30pm**  
**Sheraton Parkway North (Grand York Ballroom)**  
**600 Highway 7 East—Richmond Hill**



## ***Solidarity Against Austerity***

CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn, Secretary-Treasurer Candace Rennick and provincial executive members led a record CUPE contingent in Toronto's Labour Day parade. Despite the dreary austerity budget passed this spring, Labour Day was beautiful and sunny.

This year, CUPE Ontario adopted "Solidarity Against Austerity" as its theme, and black hats emblazoned with the slogan could be seen for miles along the parade route.

"The more working people come under attack, the more they see the value in standing together," said Rennick. "That's why CUPE is growing, with people in 52 more workplaces choosing to join with us in the last year. Together we will overcome these new challenges and build an Ontario we can all be proud of. There truly is power in a union."

CUPE members participated in Labour Day events in dozens of communities all across Ontario, celebrating their victories for safer, healthier workplaces, an improved standard of living for all Ontarians and public holidays like Labour Day.



## National Executive Board votes unanimously to support Ontario fight



At its September meeting, the CUPE National Executive Board voted unanimously to support the fight against two Ontario bills that strip workers of their Charter rights to free collective bargaining.

The NEB pledged to support CUPE Ontario's Action Plan opposing the new legislation, as well as the CUPE Ontario School Boards Coordinating Committee in its opposition to Bill 115, the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions in opposing changes to the Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act, and all CUPE members taking appropriate action to fight back against this attack on workers' rights.

The resolution also commits the National union to challenging in court the legitimacy and constitutionality of all legislation stripping collective bargaining rights, and to file a complaint with the Canadian Labour Congress and International Labour Organization.



## University workers speak out on proposed changes

Changes to Ontario's universities proposed by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MCTU) are "solutions in search of problems," and ignore the real challenges facing the sector, Ontario University Workers Coordinating Committee (OUWCC) chair Janice Folk-Dawson warned earlier this month at a Queen's Park news conference.

Folk-Dawson was joined by representatives from the Canadian Federation of Students, Ontario Public Service Employees' Union and the Ontario Council of

University Faculty Associations to raise awareness of changes proposed by the Ministry this summer.

The Ministry proposes to bring in a 12-month school year, shift more instruction from in-class to online, and convert undergraduate programs from four years to three. Despite the huge implications for students, faculty and university workers, Minister Glen Murray has refused to discuss issues including tuition fees or underfunding within the sector.



## A summer of Pride

On September 15, CUPE Ontario Secretary-Treasurer Candace Rennick, Local 126 President Lynda Bolton and members from the Peterborough area celebrated the last in a busy summer of Pride events.

This year, CUPE Ontario members participated in Pride events in a record 15 communities from Thunder Bay to Windsor to Ottawa.

"Pride Parades originated as a political demonstration – a show of strength and solidarity as well as a demand for equality. These are values CUPE Ontario members believe in strongly," says Rennick. "I'm incredibly proud CUPE members across Ontario are standing up for LGBTQ rights in our communities and advancing equality in our own union by creating a new LGBTQ position on our provincial executive."





## Health care workers rally in London, force discussion with Minister



More than 200 CUPE health care workers converged on the London constituency office of Health Minister Deb Matthews on September 21, calling for an end to health care service reforms that are resulting in bed and staffing cuts, too few ambulances and tens of thousands of people waiting for home care and long-term care.

The minister agreed to an immediate meeting with CUPE Ontario Secretary-Treasurer Candace Rennick and sector leaders to discuss the group's concerns.

"It was a step in the right direction," said Rennick after the meeting, at which Matthews agreed to further meetings to discuss specific concerns. "Front-line workers are tired; they go to work and are expected to do more with less all the time. We need to stand up for those who don't have a voice. We need more resources. We need beds. We need shorter wait lists. We need more staff. We need more hands."

## Waterloo ambulance worker receives CACO Exemplary Award

Ambulance workers proudly presented the CACO Exemplary Award to Terry Bezanson from Local 791, at their conference in Thunder Bay, Ontario, in September.

Bezanson first became vice-president of Local 791 in 1981, when the ambulance service left the Kitchener-Waterloo hospital and just after a difficult strike to achieve a first collective agreement. Since then, Bezanson has been at the table for every round of bargaining, attended nearly every CUPE National and CUPE Ontario convention, as well as every CACO conference since its inception.

His long service to his union and community includes sitting on the Ontario Health and Safety Committee and supporting CUPE charity events, especially those that involve his passion for sports including softball, golf, volleyball and basketball tournaments.

His accolades already include a Lieutenant-Governor's Award for Service.



## Poverty increasing – Raise the Rates!



Poverty in Ontario has risen to unprecedented levels under Premier Dalton McGuinty. This is why CUPE Ontario is working together with local anti-poverty groups to organize a series of Town Halls and events across Ontario in coming weeks.

The events come as the Ontario government prepares to release a new report on social assistance that, in all likelihood, will not even address the most salient issue facing those receiving assistance – abysmally low rates.

“There will be an elephant in the room when the report is issued – an elephant called social assistance rates,” says Carrie Lynn Poole-Cotnam, Chair of CUPE Ontario’s Social Services Workers Coordinating

Committee. “It’s time to stop talking around the problem, which is why we are supporting the campaign to raise the rates!” But even before the Commission issues its report, the McGuinty government continues to punish the poor with further cuts.

In their 2012 budget, the Liberals announced they are cutting funding for the “Community Start Up,” a benefit that covers costs when people get a chance to move into better housing. More than 16,000 people use the program in Ontario every month, including women and children fleeing abusive relationships.

For a list of Town Halls and events near you, visit [cupe.on.ca](http://cupe.on.ca) and follow us on Twitter at #raisetherates.

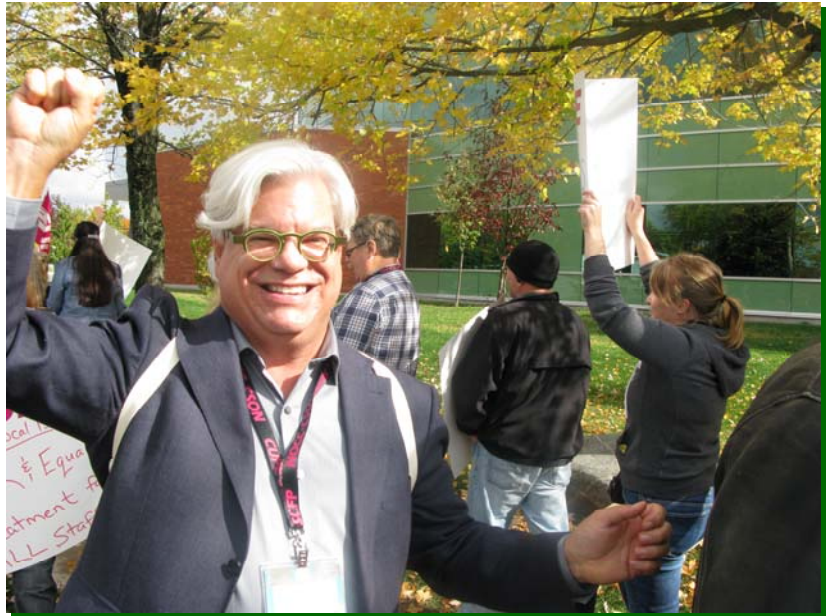


## Northern Conference delegates rally for Algoma Public Health workers

CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn led hundreds of CUPE members and supporters in a rally on October 4 at Algoma Public Health, in Sault Ste. Marie.

Delegates rallied to support CUPE 1528 members in their efforts to reach a fair contract settlement. CUPE delegates from the Northern Ontario CUPE Conference joined members of CUPE 1528 in an information picket and rally outside their workplace during the lunch hour.

"CUPE is the bedrock of this community, and we will stand strong with these workers until they achieve a collective agreement with fairness and respect for our members," said Hahn.



CUPE represents 72 members at the Public Health Unit, serving a wide area of the North, including the communities of Sault Ste. Marie, Elliot Lake, Blind River, Wawa, White River, Dubreuilville, Chapleau, Spanish, North Shore, St. Joseph's Island, Thessalon and the entire Algoma District. The workers have entered the conciliation stage of bargaining, and recently delivered a strong strike mandate to support their bargaining team to fight inequality in the workplace.

## Upcoming Events

### All Locals Leadership Meeting

Oct. 18— Sheraton Parkway North

### CUPE Ontario Fall School

Oct. 23-28 – Toronto Sheraton Centre

### CUPE Ontario Trades Conference

Nov. 6-9 – Crowne Plaza Hotel, Niagara Falls

### Women's Conference

Dec. 5-8 – Toronto Sheraton Centre

### Injured Workers/Health & Safety Conference

Jan. 23-27 – Crowne Plaza Hotel, Niagara Falls

### OSBCC Conference

Jan. 29-Feb. 2 – Toronto Sheraton Parkway North

### SSWCC Conference

Mar. 21-24 – Toronto Sheraton Centre

### CUPE Ontario Convention

May 29-June 1 – Toronto Sheraton Centre

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[www.cupe.on.ca](http://www.cupe.on.ca)