

# CUPE Ontario Resolution Defending Free Collective Bargaining and an Independent Arbitration System

***Re: Fight back against Ontario Government attacks on free collective bargaining and workers' rights***

CUPE Ontario WILL:

- Organize an activist based, militant response to stop the Ontario government's legislative attack on:
  - unions and free collective bargaining rights;
  - the independence and balance of the labour contract arbitration system;
  - workers' and retirees' pension plans; and
  - workers' and retirees' democratic and charter rights
- Escalate the fight against Bill 115, the Ontario law that strips education workers, including 55,000 CUPE members, of the right to free collective bargaining and imposes collective agreements dictated by the government
- To fight against these attacks on workers' and retirees' rights we will use a diversity of tactics including:
  - Undertake a mass membership mobilization to engage rank-and-file members, and retirees including regional meetings and workplace organizing, in response to the Ontario government's attack on workers' rights;
  - Immediately begin public education with a comprehensive multi-media advertising campaign, which includes polling and resources to measure on-going campaign success and fine-tuning of messaging;
  - Engage CUPE members and retirees directly through on-going Telephone Town Halls by Locals compiling and making available their membership personal phone numbers for this specific purpose;
  - Follow regional meetings with public town halls and community based actions in the ridings of vulnerable liberal MPPs to talk directly to the public about civil rights and our solutions for the economy of Ontario.
  - Immediately begin votes in every local to obtain mandates from CUPE members and retirees, and in all sectors, to engage in job action, defined by sector, to pressure the government to stop its interference in free collective bargaining;
- Immediately begin province-wide strike votes should the government exercise any authority to CUPE Collective Agreements that:
  - overturn collective agreement settlement
  - overturn interest arbitration awards
  - impose collective agreements
- Challenge the legitimacy and constitutionality of all legislation that strips collective bargaining rights in the courts

- Escalate our support for CUPE locals in bargaining under these challenging circumstances by implementing and fortifying regional solidarity through CUPE Councils, and by ensuring additional supports are available to locals
- Lobby Liberal and Progressive Conservative MPP's to challenge them to change their position on the Bill 115 and proposed legislation. Members with NDP MPP's will meet to provide information and stories of the legislations' negative impacts
- Promote direct action activism. Protest examples may include the upcoming Liberal leadership events
- Work to elect a pro-worker government in the upcoming Provincial election
- Support the Ontario School Boards Coordinating Committee in their opposition to Bill 115, the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions in opposing changes to the Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act
- Work together with all parts of CUPE to lead the union's response utilizing all required CUPE resources and staff
- Work with existing labour partners in our sectors as appropriate, and other labour bodies, including the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL), the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and the International Labour Organization (ILO)
- Enhance our connection, support and work with community coalitions and organizations, including outreach and direct communications with equality seeking communities to denounce and reverse the Ontario government's unconstitutional attack on working people and unions in the province

#### BECAUSE:

- Bill 115 and other proposed legislation strips CUPE members in Ontario of their right to free collective bargaining and an independent system of interest arbitration and allows the government to over-rule freely negotiated collective agreements and arbitrated awards and to force their re-negotiation in line with the government's austerity guidelines
- The Ontario government's legislation further allows the government to impose wages, terms, and significant concessions on public sector workers failing the re-negotiation of collective agreements
- Proposed legislation allows the government to put public service delivery at risk, by attacking the collective bargaining process, allowing for increased contracting out and privatization
- Allowing these attacks on workers' and retirees rights and collective bargaining to proceed would set a devastating and dangerous precedent that would spread to other provinces and jurisdictions, undermining union solidarity and our ability to effectively defend workers' rights
- Our members are our strength, fighting back against austerity works, and the members of CUPE, and our communities, deserve nothing less