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**CUPE SCFP
Ontario**

CONVENTION CAPSULE

CUPE Ontario Convention 2015

Thursday, May 28, 2015



Mobilizing against austerity in every community

CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn kicked off Convention on Wednesday morning with an electrifying speech that pledged to defend public services and public employees from the austerity agenda, and protect Ontario's public power from privatization.

"The hydro grid is there because our parents and grandparents bought and paid for it with their taxes. It belongs to all of us," Hahn told the thousand delegates who packed the Sheraton Centre to hear his speech.

In just a few short weeks, we've brought together the Keep Hydro Public Coalition, and are working closely with Andrea Horwath and the NDP to hold Premier Kathleen Wynne and Liberal government to account, he added.

A huge and growing majority of Ontarians oppose the sale, which will end public ownership, oversight and accountability. It will also cost us hundreds of millions in lost revenues and drive up hydro rates. Higher rates will be a direct hit on operating budgets for the

services we provide, meaning more layoffs and service cuts in every sector.

We must mobilize across Ontario to fight this sale, as we mobilized in record numbers during the provincial and municipal elections. The strength of our movement was proven in Alberta, where labour helped elect an NDP government.

"If the NDP can be elected to a majority after forty years of Conservatives, running on a progressive platform of raising corporate taxes and rolling back cuts in education, anything is possible," he said, adding, "We are one election away from an enhanced Canada Pension Plan, from corporations paying their fair share in taxes, from a national child care system, the list goes on and on."

Brother Hahn also paid tribute to municipal workers and university workers who were on picket lines in the past year and striking City of London employees who began a strike last week to defend their collective agreements.

Historic fights against concessions

Five CUPE locals in Ontario have taken strong stands against concession demands over the past year.

In June, Durham Region council targeted the EMS sick leave plan for Local 1764 members. It was an attempt to divide a local, but members stood together through a difficult strike that held back sick leave concessions for the very people who protect our health.

Two months later, in August, 22 members of CUPE Local 1490 in Black River-Matheson were locked out by the municipality after refusing demands for shift changes that would have meant members never having a weekend off with their families.

Through the winter, CUPE Local 3902 at the University of Toronto and Local 3903 at York University both took brave stands against precarious work and poverty-level compensation. Thousands of members stood resolute and achieved important gains that will raise the bar for contract faculty and teaching and graduate assistants. Local 3903 also won an important victory to include LGBT members in employment equity language.

Today, CUPE Local 101, representing municipal workers in London, is on their first strike since 1979. They are fighting management attempts to gut the collective agreement's language on hours of work, job evaluation, promotions, and cutting retiree benefits. At Convention, locals from across the province pledged support for our sisters and brothers in London.

Together, let's build a better Ontario: Moist

CUPE National President Paul Moist praised CUPE Ontario's success on the political front and at the bargaining table during his address to convention delegates.

He saluted CUPE Ontario members who have been on the picket line over the past year, thanking them for standing up for fairness at the bargaining table. Moist said that fight continues for all CUPE Ontario members.

"By far, our biggest challenge here in Ontario is the province's austerity agenda and their movement towards privatization," said Moist, calling out Ontario Liberal's wasting of over \$8 billion on P3s, and moves to privatize the province's hydro utility.

"CUPE stands opposed to privatization of Hydro One. It will drive up rates and will hurt the Ontario economy," said Moist. "We didn't accept this when Mike Harris tried this and we won't accept it now!"

Moist also rallied delegates to the other front in the fight against austerity the upcoming federal election.



"We have an opportunity to vote for the government we want and get it, the opportunity to elect our first NDP federal government, with Tom Mulcair as our Prime Minister," said Moist, who called on all delegates to go back to their locals and talk to their members about voting for a better, fairer, more equal Canada.

"We want to talk about voting for the kind of Canada you want for yourself and your family," said Moist. "Together, let's be active in voting for change we all believe in. Together, let's build a better Ontario."

Health and Safety Award

Kathy MacKinnon from Local 7800 received this year's CUPE Ontario Health and Safety Award.

For 25 years, Sister Kathy has served on local and joint health and safety committees, representing more than 3800 members at six hospitals and five satellite sites in Hamilton Health Sciences.

Asbestos is a key issue for Sister Kathy and members in HHS, which has more than 300 acres of asbestos in its buildings. She spent years fighting the employer, resulting two years ago in charges and fines totalling \$19,000.

Last September, she came in from vacation because the employer was not prepared to adequately protect workers dealing with patients with Ebola-like symptoms.

AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

Day 2

9:00	<p>Call to Order</p> <p>Secretary-Treasurer's Report Candace Rennick</p> <p>Guest Speaker Lucia McKeever, President, UNISON</p>
Noon-	Rally
2:00 pm	<p>Call to Order</p> <p>Sisters in Solidarity Award</p> <p>National Secretary-Treasurer Charles Fleury</p>
5:00 pm	All Candidates' Forum
7:00 pm	International Solidarity Forum