

# Action Plan Plan d'action



**PAVING THE WAY TO POVERTY  
OUVRE LA VOIE À LA PAUVRETÉ**

# Action Plan 2016: Final

## Privatization: Paving the Way to Poverty

1. We are living in an age of austerity. Governments everywhere, including the Kathleen Wynne Liberal government here in Ontario, have been cutting spending on public services upon which our communities rely, in order to maintain low corporate tax rates and enrich private enterprise. Governments have also been facilitating large-scale transfers of public wealth to private hands by selling off public assets and contracting out public services to for-profit businesses. Workers get less while business owners get more. The result is staggering economic inequality and the loss of quality public services and decent jobs.
2. Austerity policies remove the government from activities that benefit people and support collective social good. Austerity tactics include reductions in government expenditures on public services and refusing to increase budgets to meet rising costs and demand. This results in public service cuts, job losses, wage freezes, increased workload for public sector workers, and demands for concessions by our employers.
3. Essentially, austerity is also used to pit workers against each other. It is a conscious effort by governments, acting on behalf of the owning class, to divide workers. Austerity measures are about creating animosity between public sector and private sector workers, between the employed and the unemployed and underemployed, between unionized and unrepresented workers. Austerity creates a climate of fear and uncertainty, and is intended to diminish our expectations of what is possible.
4. Privatization is another key tactic that has been central to the austerity agenda, since at least the 1980s. David Harvey, one of the preeminent scholars of our economic system, calls this “accumulation by dispossession.”<sup>1</sup> In essence, privatization is the practice of taking public wealth – wealth that benefits everyone – and converting it into private property, for the sole benefit of the owners of capital. Privatization is, at its core, a form of class war against workers. In this transfer of wealth from all of us to a wealthy few, the working class as a whole loses out as public assets and public services get handed over to the private sector.
5. The real goal of privatization is not to find efficiencies in the delivery of services, as some people claim. It is not about making public services more “cost-effective.” And it is not about “unlocking the value of assets” as some duplicitous politicians would argue. Instead it is about creating new sources of profitable investment for corporations and the rich.

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<sup>1</sup> David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Oxford University Press, 2007.

6. Mounting evidence shows that austerity and privatization are making corporations and banks richer, but are not working for the people. In cases like the sell-off of Hydro One we lose a consistent source of public revenue as well as public control and oversight. Public, at-cost hydro was an important lever in the economy for over 100 years. With this sale, the Liberals have ended that control and oversight.
7. Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) and Alternative Financing and Procurement (AFP) projects, which can privatize the funding, construction and operation of public works projects, end up costing more than traditional forms of public sector financing of projects. Even the Auditor General of Ontario has found that P3s have cost the government \$8 billion more than it would have had projects been delivered by the public sector.<sup>2</sup>
8. Researchers at the University of Calgary have also found that P3s do not result in savings. P3s frequently cost more than projects run through the public sector. Furthermore, the P3 model frequently hides costs from the public<sup>3</sup> making this, and other Alternative Financing and Procurement models contrary to the principles of transparency that underpin functioning democracies.
9. The austerity agenda does not work for the economy as a whole either. Even the International Monetary Fund, certainly not a worker-friendly organization, has noted that when governments engage in austerity economic growth slows.<sup>4</sup> The global economy has been slumping since the 2007-08 financial meltdown,<sup>5</sup> and this year started with a lot of turmoil in the market.
10. Austerity and privatization are damaging us in our workplaces, communities and in our lives overall. The working class struggles to get by while the CEOs of banks and corporations gorge at the public trough. Working class people in social movements across the world are standing up and demanding better. We are, too. And now is the time for us to up our fight-back.

## Fighting back against Austerity and Privatization: Fighting for Good jobs and quality public services

11. Privatization is a major threat to CUPE members and community members who rely on the public services we provide. It must be stopped in its many forms: the sale of public

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<sup>2</sup> Office of the Auditor General, Annual Report 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Anthony E. Boardman, Matti Siemiatycki and Aidan R. Vining, "The Theory and Evidence Concerning Public-Private Partnerships in Canada and Elsewhere", *The School of Public Policy Research Papers*, volume 9, issue 12, March 2016.

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/ann-pettifor/imf-austerity-\\_b\\_2004700.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/ann-pettifor/imf-austerity-_b_2004700.html)

<sup>5</sup> David McNally, *Global Slump: The Economics and Politics of Crisis and Resistance*, Oakland: PM Press, 2011.

assets like Hydro One, public private partnerships (P3s), Social Impact Bonds (SIBs), or the contracting out of public services to the private sector or to “not-for-profit” organizations. Municipal long-term care facilities, providers of community services, and other programs are often contracted out to the not-for-profit sector which is rife with low wages, precarious work and weaker collective agreements.

**CUPE Ontario will:**

12. Fight against the transfer of public wealth to private businesses, and the transfer of public services to not-for-profits. This will include campaigns against the sell-off of public assets, contracting out of public sector jobs, and all other forms of privatization.
13. Identify where social impact bonds and other forms of social finance are being proposed and work with locals and the Social Service Workers Coordinating Committee (SSWCC) to develop plans of action to stop these destructive measures.
14. Work with sectoral committees and locals to identify cases of privatization and contracting out in our workplaces, and develop ongoing strategies to stop privatization at the local level. Local executives and rank-and-file activists will need to play a primary role in identifying risks of privatization.
15. Facilitate the work of local executives, rank-and-file activists, District Councils, and sectoral Committees in tracking every instance of privatization in our workplaces, regions, and province wide.
16. Develop regional and sectoral Emergency Response Teams that can do the work of fighting privatization on the ground. Stopping privatization can only happen with the engagement, activism and militancy of locals and the rank-and-file membership. Stopping privatization must also include educating the public and promoting popular resistance.

## Hydro Privatization

17. The people of Ontario fought to establish at-cost, public power in the early 1900s in response to sky-rocketing hydro costs. Hydro rates immediately dropped and stayed stable for decades until Mike Harris attempted to privatize our hydro system. CUPE, through the leadership of CUPE Local 1 at Toronto Hydro, fought back to prevent this from happening. In Ontario and elsewhere in Canada and the world, non-profit, public power has been a vital ingredient to sustaining a strong economy built on good jobs and healthy communities.
18. Ontarians understand this, which is why an overwhelming majority of us oppose this privatization plan. In fact, opposition to hydro privatization unites Ontarians across the class divide, political leanings, and geographical locations. Despite this reality, Kathleen Wynne and the Ontario Liberals remain steadfast in their dedication to line the pockets

of privatizers and banks – who happen to be fundraisers for Wynne and the Liberals – by selling off our public hydro system in 15% chunks despite overwhelming public opposition across the political spectrum.

**CUPE Ontario will:**

19. Campaign to halt the sale of Hydro One so that it can be restored to full public ownership.
20. Continue to apply targeted political pressure to Liberal MPPs in their ridings to hold them politically accountable for the disastrous consequences of selling our hydro system.
21. Create visible opposition on the ground to help voters point the finger of responsibility directly at their local Liberal MPP by name.
22. Build on municipal opposition to hydro privatization and fight for public, municipal ownership and operation of Local Distribution Companies (LDCs) by targeting municipal politicians.
23. Build on our internal organizing strategy to increase members' capacity for local campaigns on this and other anti-privatization campaigns.
24. Build the Keep Hydro Public coalition to expand the network of organizations working with us, and encourage coalition partners to help fund the campaign.
25. Seize the potential of the Keep Hydro Public campaign's on-the-ground activity and community links to organize against other forms of privatization.

## **Fair Taxation**

26. Corporations in Ontario have been given billions of dollars of tax breaks from the Liberal government. In his memoir, Dalton McGuinty bragged that he had given businesses \$8 billion in corporate tax cuts per year, starving the public of resources necessary to promote good jobs and high quality public services. Kathleen Wynne has continued this policy of gutting the public sector to reward the capitalist class.
27. Once again we can see that the Liberals' economic policies are failing the people of Ontario. Proponents of corporate tax cuts claim that it is a necessary measure to create a competitive business environment and spark investment. In actual fact, low corporate income tax rates do nothing of the sort. Low corporate income tax rates are actually correlated with low rates of investment, and eras with higher corporate income taxes are statistically more likely to be associated with high levels of

investment.<sup>6</sup> This is contrary to the spin of business owners and their lackeys in government who are furthering their own private interests at our collective expense.

**CUPE Ontario will:**

28. Continue to demand that the provincial government restore corporate income tax rates to at least the level of 14% that they were at in 2009.
29. Demand fair taxation that closes tax shelters, and compels payment from corporate tax cheats who use offshore companies to avoid paying taxes.
30. Demand that the government close tax loopholes, remove corporate exemptions, and increase measures to catch corporate tax cheats, recover lost revenue, and fine corporate tax evaders.
31. Push for the creation of revenue-generating tools such as progressive municipal taxes that can help fund municipal and school board services.

## Increasing the Role of the Public Sector

32. As workers in the public sector we know the value of public services, and the importance of having a strong role for public provision of services. It is important that we produce for human need, because if everything was left to the private sector, goods and services would only be produced if they make a profit. When production is only done for profit, our society would never be able to produce everything we need. If there is no profit in affordable housing, or poverty reduction strategies, or affordable universal child care (for example) the private sector would not touch it. We require public provision of these and so many other services.
33. We need an expansion of the public sector. The most fully developed anti-privatization campaign is one that demands that we bring more under public control. This means contracting in work that we have lost. It also means expanding health care to cover more medical needs, including pharmaceuticals and dentistry. It means demanding that infrastructure projects are publicly financed, and not delivered through wasteful P3s or other forms of alternative financing. And it requires a public ownership stake in any cash transfers or subsidies that are given to the private sector to induce them to invest.

**CUPE Ontario will:**

34. Advocate for the growth and long-term expansion of the public sector. This will include not only protecting the assets that are currently owned by the province, but expanding public ownership, including revenue generating assets.

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<sup>6</sup> Jordan Brennan, Do Corporate Income Tax Rate Reductions Accelerate Growth?, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, November 2015.



35. Demand that all public services and social programs be delivered on the basis of universality.
36. Demand an expansion of universal public health care, including funding to make up for years of budget freezes and expansion of services covered under the public system. Demand that a universal public Pharmacare plan, and a universal public Dental plan be part of the expansion of health care. Fight for publicly funded, owned and operated infrastructure projects, and insist that the government give up its deficit-phobia. We are nowhere near a debt crisis,<sup>7</sup> and interest rates are at historic lows, which makes public borrowing much more affordable.
37. Support the Health and Safety Committee in its work on implementing the recommendations of the Mental Health Working Group, and in demanding that more public resources be allocated to support people who experience mental illness, and develop public programs for mental health care and mental illness prevention.
38. Develop strategies to address violence in the workplace across all sectors in CUPE.
39. Join the Canadian Union of Postal Workers in demanding a publicly owned postal banking service.

## Fighting Poverty and Income Inequality

40. Poverty continues to be rampant, and governments have done nothing to change this. Economic justice has been denied to a large segment of our society. Social assistance rates continue to be set far below poverty levels. Many workers continue to work at poverty wages. Almost 30% of workers in Ontario earn less than \$15/hour. Women, Aboriginal workers, racialized workers, workers with disabilities, LGBTQ workers, and young workers are overrepresented in the group of low wage employees. Far too many workers, including CUPE members in all sectors, only have access to part-time, casual, and other forms of precarious work, which further exacerbates their income insecurity.
41. The provincial government has proposed a Basic Income pilot project. To some the promise of a guaranteed annual income, or a Basic Income Guarantee, has some immediate appeal. For those of us who care about social justice it sounds like a way to raise incomes for everyone. However, guaranteed income programs can be designed on a highly regressive basis. These programs can be used as an excuse to merge and eliminate other income support programs, and can act as subsidies to low wage employers. Regressive forms of a Basic Income are used to justify privatization, cutting services and jobs. We must fight against the austerity model of the Basic Income.

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<sup>7</sup> No Crisis on the Horizon: Ontario Debt 1990 – 2015, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, January 2016.

42. The government's plan is to implement a Basic Income pilot project by the end of the year. Since this government has a dismal record on eliminating poverty, and has fully embraced austerity, we are unconvinced that this pilot project will be based on progressive principles.
43. Any anti-poverty plan must be based on the principles of universality, and be designed to raise everyone out of poverty. It must be publicly delivered, and based on enhancing the important services that our members provide. It must be a component of a broadly based anti-poverty strategy. We can promote the principles of a progressive model as part of our campaign against the anti-worker models that we know will be coming from the Liberals.

**CUPE Ontario will:**

44. Aggressively defend and fight to expand all public services provided to support recipients. Under no circumstances can we accept a model for a Basic Income that leads to reductions in the vitally important services that are delivered, or that results in our members losing jobs.
45. Work with the SSWCC to develop a comprehensive vision of what a socially progressive anti-poverty plan would look like, and actively campaign against any Basic Income project that fails to live up to that progressive vision.
46. Provide resources to locals so members can have extensive knowledge about the different models of a Basic Income plan, and so they can develop the skills to fight against the kinds of proposals that are promoted by right wingers like Liberals and Conservatives.
47. Work with local leadership, sectoral committees, District Councils, and rank-and-file activists to pressure the government to design a comprehensive anti-poverty plan based on universal and expanded public services, full-employment, incomes and social assistance rates high enough to raise everyone out of poverty, and increases to corporate taxation to redistribute wealth.
48. Continue to work on the Raise the Rates campaign, including allocating money to the campaign to support its activities. Work with the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty and other allies to continue the struggle to raise social assistance rates to levels that will raise people out of poverty. Through this work, and through these alliances we will build a strong social movement union that can contribute to building broader working class power.
49. Engage with our allies in the labour movement and other coalition partners and progressive organizations to join the fight for true economic and social justice by fighting for full employment and real poverty elimination strategies, including providing



concrete support to the \$15 and Fairness Campaign, and the OFL's Make it Fair campaign.

## Building Our Base and Building a Working Class Movement

50. Privatization and austerity can only be overcome through a mobilization of the rank-and-file to counter the divisive politics that confront us. Building the base is about creating the capacity throughout our union to get us in fighting shape. It requires building strength in our locals and communities to respond quickly to emerging threats. And it requires strengthening our members' capacity to build working class coalitions in their communities.
51. Ending austerity and privatization will take massive mobilization. It will take a broadly based movement. Business owners have their way with governments, even when their demands are harmful to the economy and the public, because they have political power based on their wealth. In order to fight back we need to develop working class power based on our solidarity and willingness to take action.
52. Build on the Stand up for Fairness campaign to use member-to-member communication to build rank-and-file activism in anti-privatization campaigns, support for bargaining, and to build union power.
53. Building our base is the only way we can fight the politics of fear and division created by governments and the owners of capital. We can raise workers' expectations and demand a better kind of society.
54. Workers' militancy has always been the source of our strength. We can develop militancy by building workers' power in the workplace. Militant action is what has made the gains that we have. It has won us the public services that we rely on, and the right to join a union and collectively bargain. When workers come together we can change the world. We do not need to merely defend what we have. If we build our base, and build a strong working class movement, we can eventually have democratic control over all of the wealth we create, instead of allowing the wealthy few the right to hoard it.
55. One of the most powerful tools we have is the General Strike. Building for a General Strike will take a lot of work, but it is achievable. It is not something that can only be done by CUPE. We will need to engage the rest of the labour movement, non-unionized workers, and community allies to organize towards it. We will need to organize our demands and begin strategic planning to launch a General Strike at the most politically advantageous time. This kind of organizing and planning is not only doable and possible, but is in fact required in these political conditions.

**CUPE Ontario will:**

56. Encourage all locals to affiliate to CUPE Ontario and to District Councils, so that all structures of CUPE can work together with allies to develop strategic plans for fighting back.
57. Assist locals and District Councils in developing local and community based committees of rank-and-file activists capable of responding to attacks wherever and whenever they occur. We need boots on the ground across the province to mount a strong defense of public services and quality jobs, and to fight for a different world.
58. Ensure that activist training is provided to rank-and-file members. Engage rank and file members in a range of political activities, including lobbies, rallies, and building ties with allies who share our values.
59. Build mentoring teams for health and safety and injured workers.
60. Call on CUPE National to urgently dedicate more resources to organizing non-unionized workers across the province, and to develop concrete plans for organizing precarious workers. This will include assigning more organizing staff to Ontario.
61. Work with Sector Committees and assist CUPE National in training member organizers and develop comprehensive sector-specific organizing plans including a coordinated plan to organize home care workers, and wall-to-wall organizing in existing CUPE workplaces.
62. Work with CUPE National and the Equality Committees of CUPE Ontario to develop strategies for organizing workplaces where equity seekers are employed.
63. Call on CUPE National to provide additional servicing representatives to support newly organized bargaining units, and also address the increasing workload of existing staff. Increases to staffing levels must also include creating additional legal capacity.
64. Explore new ways of coordinated bargaining (such as the Quebec model of “common front” bargaining) to take on negotiating with the Kathleen Wynne government.
65. Lobby CUPE National to provide more resources to support coordinated bargaining, including more staff and campaign supports. This will include additional supports for new forms of central bargaining, like in school boards.
66. As part of building our capacities, evaluate membership engagement of all campaigns and encourage locals to provide data on the level of membership engagement in order to measure our success.
67. Building the base is a necessary precondition to engaging in the kind of militant action that will improve workers’ lives. Through the process of building the base, and developing strong coalitions with other unions, working class organizations, and other

groups supportive of our goals we will engage in escalating actions that could culminate in a General Strike.

68. Create a plan with escalating action, up to and including the call for a General Strike, in collaboration with the rest of the labour movement and community allies, and seize strategic political opportunities where militant disruption will have maximum impact in stopping the austerity agenda throughout our sectors, including hydro privatization.

## Changing Workplaces Review: Labour Law and Employment Standards Changes

69. The provincial government is currently engaging in a review of the Employment Standards Act (ESA) and the Labour Relations Act (LRA). The review gives us an opportunity to work with our allies in the labour movement and in other worker organizations, like the Workers Action Centre in Toronto, to pressure the government to make legislative improvements that will make an immediate difference in people's lives.
70. The final reports of the review will be released in the fall of this year, and it is expected that any changes to the ESA and LRA will take place in the first months of 2017 at the earliest. We still have an opportunity to press for the best possible improvements to the law. But if the Liberals once again fail to be the progressives they claim to be, we will continue to fight for laws that benefit workers.
71. Joining the \$15 and Fairness campaign is not just about raising the standard for workers without union representation. It is also part of an anti-privatization campaign. When we raise the conditions for all workers we take wages and terms of employment out of competition. Privatization becomes less attractive because it becomes less possible for the profiteers to take advantage of low wage, precarious and vulnerable workers. Increasing the size of the public sector, and increasing public sector employment, becomes the way to provide good jobs to workers who benefit the most from improved employment standards.

### **CUPE Ontario will:**

72. Support and help finance the Ontario Federation of Labour's "Make it Fair" campaign. This will include encouraging locals and District Councils to endorse it, work with Labour Councils, and participate in all of its actions in order to promote changes to the Employment Standards Act and Labour Relations Act that benefit workers. Important changes include extending paid sick leave to all workers and providing paid leave to workers who experience domestic violence.

73. Support and help finance the \$15 and Fairness campaign, and continue to work with the Workers Action Centre, and other allies in the fight for ESA reforms that protect all workers, and increase the minimum wage to at least \$15/hour.
74. Campaign to support migrant workers, and support the inclusion of a Migrant Workers Bill of Rights in the ESA
75. Fight for changes to the ESA that give increased protections to workers who gain employment through Temporary Employment Agencies.
76. Demand that the government extend the right to card check certification to all workers in Ontario.
77. Demand that anti-scab legislation be included in the amended LRA, and stronger protections for first contract arbitration when unions request it.

## Pensions

78. Expansion of the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) has been an important goal of the labour movement for years. The basic design of the CPP is sound. It's a defined benefit plan that is universal, covering all employees in Canada.
79. But the CPP still is too meagre an income to ensure that all Canadians have a dignified and financially secure retirement. That is why we have been pressing governments at the provincial and federal level to double the CPP as a matter of social and economic justice.
80. While the Harper Conservatives were in office CPP expansion was not on the federal government's agenda. In light of that vacuum, the Ontario government proposed creating an Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP).
81. The ORPP could have been a good idea, as long as the design is right. As usual, however, the Liberal government designed a plan that is not progressive or universal. The ORPP cuts out workers who have what the government calls a "comparable workplace plan". To make matters worse, now that the new federal government has indicated that it might expand the CPP, the Ontario government is going to try to force the federal government and the other provinces to accept a non-universal model for CPP expansion.
82. Attacking the universality of the public pension plan is a huge threat to CPP, one of our most cherished and important social programs. Once plans are no longer universal it becomes a lot easier to carve more people out, leading to a two-tiered public pension plan. Two-tiered social programs are completely unacceptable.
83. We must also develop strategies to get greater control over how our workplace pension plans are administered. Pension funds are massive pools of financial capital.

Fund managers tend to act like bankers, trying to maximize the rate of return on their investments. Very often the investments that appear to be the most lucrative are privatized public services, including investments in public infrastructure.

84. Under the dictates of managers that care about the size of the pool of money that they manage, and care nothing about services or quality jobs, our pension funds are purchasing public assets when they are sold. For example, OMERS bought shares in the privatized shares of Hydro One. Worse still, these managers lobby governments to privatize more of the public sector.
85. Managers of our pension plans are helping to expand the privatization agenda, working against the interests of members of the plan.

**CUPE Ontario will:**

86. Participate in the campaign to double the CPP on a universal basis, ensuring that it covers all workers in Canada.
87. Continue to campaign to change the ORPP, to make it a universal defined benefit plan based entirely on the design of the existing CPP. The ultimate goal will be to fully integrate the ORPP into a fully expanded and universal CPP.
88. Fight within our existing pension plans to make sure that plan managers do not lobby for a two-tiered public pension system.
89. Campaign to allow locals to negotiate, on a plan by plan basis, for stacking of benefits with the expansion of the public pension system.
90. Develop strategies to gain more control over the administration of our workplace pension plans to prevent them from contributing to the problem of privatization.
91. Strongly encourage and support its network of CUPE pension trustees to campaign at their boards to expand defined benefit pension coverage to all part-time workers and to eliminate any barriers which exist within pension plans that discourage part-time enrolment.

## Political Action

92. We are in a rare situation in which we are two years away from the next municipal and provincial elections, and more than three years away from the next federal election. This gives us a lot of time to develop our strategies for engaging in electoral politics. We also have time to develop strategies for how we engage in other forms of politics, like lobbying, coalition building and campaign work, developing strategies of social movement unionism, and engaging in direct action in ways that make gains for workers.

93. Our committees have shown that when we build our members' capacities, members can develop our own expertise on difficult and complex issues. We don't need to rely on bosses and so-called experts to run our workplaces, our pensions, or our economy. Workers can develop the skills and expertise to do this ourselves. And we can use the fruits of our labour to create a society based on the principle of "from each according to their ability, to each according to their need".
94. This is the ultimate goal of our movement, to build a new world from the ashes of the old. It will take a great deal of concerted political action to achieve this. A different world is possible. In fact, a different world is necessary!

**CUPE Ontario will:**

95. Hold a political action conference in November 2016, in keeping with the resolution passed at the 2015 convention. At the conference we will be discussing, in detail, all of the different ways that CUPE and its members engage in political action, including electoral politics, lobbying, building a social movement union and coalition building with other working class organizations, direct action, and what it takes to build for a mass movement to demand and achieve change.
96. Develop strategies to engage in electoral politics that prioritizes an agenda that benefits all workers, and which develops our members' skills to do the work of electoral campaigning, including running for office.
97. Encourage our members to engage in the upcoming by-election in Scarborough-Rouge River. We can use the by-election as an opportunity to prioritize issues that are important to CUPE members, including the sell-off of Hydro one and other privatization schemes.
98. Work with CUPE National to pressure the Federal Liberal government to implement progressive policies that benefit all workers.
99. Work with locals, District Councils and the Union Development Department to help develop the capacities of rank-and-file members to engage in all forms of political action, from developing local political action committees, to lobbying MPPs, from developing coalitions with allied organizations to engaging in strategic direct action.
100. Ensure that all of our political action is done in a way that promotes involvement by members all equity seeking groups, and makes equality a central component of all of our political work.

## **Taking the Leap**

101. Environmental degradation, global warming, and climate change are major pressing concerns. Failure to deal with the impending environmental crisis will lead to



catastrophic results. This is why CUPE Ontario has signed on to the Leap Manifesto, and why delegates to the CUPE National Convention in 2015 voted to endorse it. Radical changes in our economy and in our government are necessary to saving our environment from destruction. The public sector has a significant role to play in this.

102. A central component of the Leap Manifesto is the demand for a just transition. This demand requires that all actions taken to reduce carbon emissions also include measures to create good jobs for workers who are displaced from high-carbon industries. By developing strong policies and practices to support a just transition we can win the support of workers who are vulnerable to the kind of economic shift called for in the Leap Manifesto.

**CUPE Ontario will:**

103. Work with the rest of the labour movement and allies to demand comprehensive and effective measures be taken by governments to combat global warming and climate change.
104. Demand that any plans for environmental justice respect Aboriginal treaty rights, and learn from the work that Aboriginal communities have done to protect “rivers, coasts, forests and lands from out-of-control industrial activity.”<sup>8</sup>
105. Demand that government action on the environment include plans for a Just Transition for communities and for workers. A Just Transition ensures that workers in industries that are affected by climate change policies will be given the resources necessary to find good jobs in other workplaces. This includes reinvigorating our work on the long-standing labour demand that we have full employment.
106. Work with our allies to develop comprehensive and concrete proposals for what Just Transition policies and programs would look like, in order to protect workers who will transition from work in the high-carbon economy, to jobs in low-carbon sectors.
107. Fight to ensure that governments adequately fund public sector workplaces for all of the costs of implementing cap-and-trade and other programs, so that the cost of environmental action does not come out of spending on services or by cutting jobs. This is also part of the Just Transition.
108. Demand that public investments in new environmentally sound infrastructure projects be done through the public sector, and not through wasteful P3s or other forms of Alternative Financing and Procurement.
109. Vigorously oppose trade agreements such as the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). The TPP will create conditions for further environmental destruction by the prevention of

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<sup>8</sup> The Leap Manifesto.

green procurement. It will also worsen the privatization of public assets, exacerbate the crisis of poverty on a world-wide scale, increase drug costs, and reinforce anti-democratic decision making.

110. Demand that new renewable energy production projects be based on public ownership and democratic control of electricity.
111. Help locals develop Environmental Committees to promote environmental justice in their workplaces, their communities, and across the province.
112. Strike an Environmental Working Group of three people to provide advice to the Executive Board, and liaise with the National Environment Committee and social justice partners on all the issues related to shifting our economy. This will include a review of CUPE Ontario's consumer practices in relation to local environmental sustainability.

## Fighting for Equality

### **CUPE Ontario will:**

113. Through our policies, practices and political organizing, maintain opposition to the disproportionate effects of privatization and underfunding of public services on black, indigenous and workers of colour, LGBTQ workers and workers with disabilities, as well as women facing intersecting equality issues.
114. Work with all levels of our union to ensure that equality work receives adequate resources and supports, including providing sufficient staff support to equality committees.
115. Building on the democratic expansion of CUPE Ontario Executive Board's equality seats, develop education, training and policy development to increase the union participation of equality seekers by removing barriers and fighting racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia and transphobia at all levels of CUPE, our workplaces and our communities.
116. Call on all levels of government to invest in broadening access to public services for undocumented people, migrants and refugees so that they can access services without fear of reprisals.
117. Stand in solidarity with indigenous communities fighting colonial violence and multi-generational, community trauma caused by residential schools, continued lack of social supports and even the most basic public services for indigenous communities, and foundational systemic racism that pervades all social and political institutions.
118. Support all of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 Calls to Action to redress the legacy of residential schools, beginning with the Aboriginal Council's

campaign to demand anti-colonial curriculum in our education system, developed by working closely with indigenous communities.

119. Stand in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement by mobilizing our members and other allies in the labour movement to oppose systemic anti-black racism and anti-black violence through policing.
120. Demand that the province fully eliminate the racist, anti-black police practice of carding, including the deletion of all previously recorded data, consistent implementation amongst different police boards, and concrete disciplinary measures for officers who continue to card.
121. Work with our members and allies to push for an immediate review of the Special Investigations Unit in close consultation with black communities and families victimized by police violence.
122. Work with allies to ensure we can address and prevent sexual violence and victim-blaming in our workplaces, unions, and communities.
123. Continue to build on our efforts to broaden CUPE members' participation in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Pride events across the province and highlight the labour movement's role in fighting for LGBTQ rights.
124. Continue to support the Racial Justice Committee in their community outreach work through Carnival, and other such events, as well as work in coalition with other community and cultural groups to promote racial justice in workplaces and communities.
125. Build on the Aboriginal Council's work to call for a public inquiry for missing and murdered indigenous women and girls by ensuring political accountability and increased awareness of the social and economic issues faced by indigenous women.
126. Campaign through the Workers with Disabilities Committee to continue internal education on disability issues and push for increased accessibility and supportive legal frameworks.
127. Continue to work within CUPE structures such as the Women's Committee and sector committees, as well as labour and community allies, campaign against ongoing gender inequality, fight for pay equity, public universal childcare, access to women's health resources and other women's issues, with an understanding of the additionally marginalized experience of racialized and LGBTQ women.
128. Campaign to eliminate the "care penalty" encountered by workers providing front-line human services. Demand that governments develop concrete plans to end the devaluation of care-based work.

129. Continue to campaign against the gender pay gap which further marginalizes indigenous women, women of colour, women with disabilities, LGBTQ women and women experiencing intersecting oppression. This will be done, in part, through our responses to the Gender Pay Gap review being conducted by the government.
130. Continue to address precarious working conditions that disproportionately affect workers of colour and young workers, and actively support the 15 and Fairness provincial campaign to raise the minimum wage and improve employment standards.
131. Through the International Solidarity Committee and Racial Justice Committee, continue to work with Migrant Workers Alliance for Change and other allies to end arbitrary limits on migrant workers and demand full status to live and work in Canada.
132. As part of our international solidarity work, support the international working class by maintaining an anti-war stance and continuing to oppose the military occupation of Palestine as is consistent with our policy.
133. Through the Young Workers Committee encourage locals to send at least one young worker to CUPE Ontario's and CUPE National's conventions to support the growth of young workers activism.
134. Encourage locals to facilitate attendance of young workers at the 2016 CUPE Ontario Young Workers Conference and provide member book-off support to maximize turnout and planning the conference with CUPE Ontario staff.
135. Support and resource sex workers' struggle for human and labour rights, condemn the criminalization of sex workers, support their labour organizations and harm reduction programs and support legal sex workers in accessing their labour rights.
136. Continue to encourage CUPE National to strengthen employment equity and representation of our diverse membership including aboriginal workers in hiring and promotion within CUPE.
137. Call on employers and on the Ontario government to provide gender-neutral washrooms in public places and in workplaces;
138. Work with the Pink Triangle Committee to advocate for broader and more inclusive sex-education programs in public schools, with an emphasis on education around non-traditional families, non-traditional relationships and non-traditional gender and sexual identities.

## Home Care

### **CUPE Ontario will:**

139. With the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, continue to work with allies like the Ontario Health Coalition, regional community organizations, key constituent groups and other unions to highlight the harms of a rapidly privatizing, underfunded, “patch-work” healthcare system, and show that demand exists for a properly funded public system.
140. Through the Health Care Workers Coordinating Committee (HCWCC), and with the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, continue to campaign for investment in a public home care system that can meet the needs of our aging population and its care providers, and as a vital part of the functioning of our communities and economy.
141. With the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, respond to the significant restructuring of healthcare in Ontario including changes to the Community Care Access Centres (CCACs) and other areas of healthcare to ensure proper care for Ontarians relying on home care and fair wages and working conditions for workers.
142. With the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, demand justice, equitable income and fair working conditions for home care Personal Support Workers (PSWs), a group of vulnerable front-line workers who are mostly immigrant women of colour working under stressful, precarious conditions.
143. With the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, based on surveys collected and focus groups held featuring the experience of home care PSWs and those receiving care in the community, release a report and conduct a media tour with specialists to pressure the province into instituting guaranteed hours of work.
144. With the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, through a public campaign and internal mobilization, defend the interests of our members working in Community Care Access Centres, where drastic government restructuring is expected.

## Hospitals

145. Analyze the changes the province has made to the resident classification system and their impact on workloads and resident care.
146. Call for the immediate reinstatement of Sue McIntyre, RPN, who was fired for speaking about violence at a CUPE conference in January.

147. Support the campaign of the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions/CUPE to end violence against healthcare staff, including the demands that funding and staffing for Ontario hospitals and long term care facilities increase to the Canadian average.
148. Support the legislation drafted by the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions/CUPE to protect healthcare workers from violence, as was recently adopted by New York State.
149. Support healthcare workers to have the same rights to refuse unsafe work as other workers in the public sector.
150. Support the demand for adequate compensation and payment for health and psychological services for workers who are the victims of violence.

## Libraries

### **CUPE Ontario will:**

151. Continue to campaign for internal capacity-building, member engagement, increased coordination and strengthened solidarity amongst library workers to fight the growth of precarious, part-time work with no benefits or pensions in this sub-sector.
152. Continue the library worker postcard campaign to raise the profile of library workers through positive, visible community actions with the goal of pressure municipal politicians to invest in libraries as community-building institutions across Ontario.

## Long Term Care

### **CUPE Ontario will:**

153. Working with the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, demand that the Liberal Government stop ignoring the escalating resident-on-resident violence in Long Term Care Homes, and provide seniors with the care they require by passing into law the “Time to Care Bill”, which call for a 4-hour legislated daily care standard for Long Term Care residents. More front line staff are urgently needed in Long Term Care homes.
154. Working with the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, build on HCWCC’s active Time to Care campaign, its Mobilization Training and ongoing campaign activity which has yielded a high level of grassroots, member-led activity and strengthened ties with community allies across the province, resulting in broad public impact.
155. Working with the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, further engage successful tactics such as rallies to respond to job cuts at long term care homes, media conferences, lobbies in target ridings as well as Queen’s Park, the “Make it Blue Day” social media



campaign, a June Week of Action, and other local organizing actions with creative features that will further engage the public, culminating in a large Queen's Park event on October 4, 2016 coinciding with International Older Person's Day.

## **Municipalities**

### **CUPE Ontario will:**

156. Continue to engage municipal locals in the fight against hydro privatization at both provincial and municipal levels.
157. Strengthen the Ontario Municipal Employees' Coordinating Committee's (OMECC) area-level presence by building area networks that can regularly meet and work together to respond to privatization and concessionary bargaining threats from municipal employers.
158. Work with local presidents towards internal mobilization that can build capacity and create the conditions required for coordinated bargaining.
159. Support municipal locals in lobbying and "council watch" efforts to support and maintain strong public services, and bring previously contracted-out services back into the jurisdiction of the municipality.
160. Develop strong fight-back campaigns against all forms of privatization.

## **Paramedic Services**

### **CUPE Ontario will:**

161. Build on the CUPE Ambulance Committee of Ontario's (CACO) internal awareness campaign through brochures, campaign video and media releases to highlight the life-saving emergency services provided by paramedics and communications officers as specially-trained, emergency healthcare professionals.
162. Continue to campaign for public safety and emergency care from appropriately trained workers by pressuring the provincial government and municipalities to stop the incursion of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association (OPFFA) into paramedic services.
163. Ensure that provincial and municipal levels of government support the expansion of community paramedicine programs that have shown results and gained public support.
164. Continue to oppose a regulatory college for paramedics.

## Public Health

### **CUPE Ontario will:**

165. Build on the inaugural Public Health forum jointly organized by HCWCC and OMECC, strengthen our Public Health Working Group to mobilize against a new funding formula by the government resulting in flat-line budgets for most Public Health Units in Ontario.
166. Initiate a public campaign and internal mobilization to bring awareness of the importance of prevention-based health care and the vital programs and services offered in our communities by front line public health workers.

## School Boards

### **CUPE Ontario will:**

167. Raise community awareness of the critical importance of our members' work, and build community allies in order to build support for bargaining.
168. Engage with community allies to fight school closures.
169. Continue to work with community allies who support the concept of schools being community hubs.
170. Expose flaws in the funding formula and lobby with allies for a full and public review of the funding of education.
171. Aggressively fight any attempt to contract out our members' work.
172. Ensure the government prioritizes the work of our members in funding and budget planning.
173. Coordinate membership activities to maximize our efforts, and mobilize members to engage in locally planned activities.
174. Continue to lobby CUPE National for sustained funding for Provincial Bargaining.
175. Fight for improvements to the central bargaining process that will maximize our bargaining power.
176. Continue to make the issue of violence in the workplace visible, with the objective of eliminating it.
177. Lobby the federal government to fix Employment Insurance for school board workers.

178. Through CUPE National, train member organizers to help organize non-unionized workers in the school system.

## Social Services

179. The Child Welfare system is currently undergoing a multi-pronged attack by government, the Office of the Child Advocate, and media after a number of high profile coroner's inquests after the death of a child and a security breach. CAS members are facing an imminent threat of major transformation and the dismantling of a system that has been in place for decades. The chronic underfunding of the sector has resulted in workers being expected to do more with less, including cuts to programs and services that help families and children who are involved in the care system. Amalgamations, mergers, and shared services continue to be proposed as additional cost-savings measures and not with the intent to re-direct those funds to front-line services.

### **CUPE Ontario will:**

180. Continue to lobby MPPs and apply pressure to the Employer Association to call for the immediate implementation of the Ontario Auditor's Report recommendations that could remedy the crisis in the child welfare system that has been intentionally created through austerity measures.
181. Engage in coordinated political action and increase cross-sectoral efforts that will pressure provincial, federal and municipal governments to increase funding to social services, including childcare and developmental services.
182. Strengthen relations with locals and members, and develop members into activists and leaders, through internal mobilizing efforts towards joint planning and strategizing on central issues such as pay equity and the gender wage gap.
183. Continue to work with CUPE Ontario Equality Committees to integrate an equality lens into all Social Service Workers Coordinating Committee (SSWCC) campaigns.
184. Continue to work with Ontario's Equal Pay Coalition (EPC) and other union allies to eliminate the gender pay gap by taking part in the gender wage gap consultations, encouraging local's and members' participating in Equal Pay Day, continuing the strategic use of the successful pop-up gender pay gap bake shop, and lobbying for a dedicated source of funding for pay equity adjustments for public sector workers.
185. Build on campaign activity responding to the failed systems SAMS and CPIN instituted by the province with far-reaching negative implications for workers and service recipients in the community.

## Universities

### **CUPE Ontario will:**

186. Develop and implement a Good Jobs campaign that aggressively fights privatization, casualization, and contracting-out on university campuses. Jobs that pay fair wages and provide decent working conditions must be maintained and the numbers of those positions increased.
187. Demand the provincial government provide adequate, multi-year, reliable and predictable public funding to universities, as well as firm regulation of administrative size and compensation that guarantees that the majority of funding goes to research, teaching, maintenance and service work. This funding formula for Ontario universities must support good jobs and quality public education fall all students across the province.
188. Push the provincial government to replace individual Acts to Incorporate that govern post-secondary institutions with one piece of legislation governing all post-secondary institutions. This Act must include provisions to ensure the governing councils at each institution have seats for workers, students and community members.
189. Coordinate with the National Post-Secondary Task Force to put access to Post-Secondary Education on the federal government's agenda. Include the demand for the creation of a Post-Secondary Education Act that calls on the federal government to provide transfer payments that are dedicated to post-secondary education to the provinces. Such payments should be tied to clear provisions for accountability.
190. Continue to develop and implement our campaigns, both provincially and nationally, that promote the social and economic value of post-secondary education and that it is a social good that must be accessible to all.
191. Resource a comprehensive campaign that develops a sector-wide coordinated bargaining strategy with specific goals for academic workers and support workers bargaining in 2016 and 2017. Common bargaining demands include a 2019 common expiry date, job security, workload protection and fair compensation.
192. Continue to provide leadership on obtaining a sector wide defined benefit pension plan that would be accessible to all workers, including sessionals/contract faculty, part-timers and casuals.

193. In collaboration with the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) develop a campaign that addresses the outrageous tuition fees and the cost of private health care (UHIP) that International Students encounter in our post-secondary education system.
194. Enhance our coalition work with the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA), Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), United Steel Workers (USW), Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation (OSSTF) through the Ontario University and Colleges Coalition (OUCC) that presents a common front for public post-secondary education.
195. Provide research and develop collective agreement language and educational material to address the wage inequalities on campuses between workers and management.
196. Develop sub-sector specific strategies and goals for recognizing and eliminating the gender wage gap in post-secondary education.
197. Continue to demand free and accessible post-secondary education.
198. Support the work of Black Lives Matter to expose the systemic racism in post-secondary education including adopting their recommendations for reform.
199. Collaborate with the Aboriginal Council to ensure that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations for post-secondary education are enacted.
200. Collaborate with the Canadian Federation of Students to lobby the federal government to fulfill their commitment to First Nations learners by increasing funding to the Post-Secondary Student Support Program.
201. Lobby CUPE National to resource a comprehensive organizing campaign that provides for mapping of each campus, member book offs, staff support, and progressive and updated campaign material.
202. Organize submissions to the National Strike Pay Task Force that details the need for action on changes to the Strike Pay Regulations to protect young and precarious workers.

