

**Name:** Stephen Seaborn

**Position:** Provincial Retirees Representative & Chair, CUPE Ontario Retirees Network

**Committees:** Pensions, Environment/Climate

*(For committees with multiple board members, only the chair needs to report)*

---

**Major Issues on Committee Work Plan:** Convention resolution 27 called for the promotion of CUPE Ontario's constitutional amendment of the National constitution which will facilitate our mobilization of CUPE's retirees.

**Work against Privatization:** Retirees continue to rally in support of the end to privately owned and delivered LTC and other health-related services. As the pandemic's fourth wave accelerates our retirees are joining both on-line and cavalcade activism to put a stop to profit-making in the public services a good number of us depend on. Our Retirees Network members receive all CUPE Ontario campaign alerts about healthcare actions in our communities.

**Equality Work:** As retirees are keen to educate ourselves and our union about the impacts of ageism in the workplace and in retirement. We are encouraged by our Ontario Human Rights Code which designates age as a specified *protected ground* while noting that "discrimination based on age is not taken as seriously as other forms of discrimination. However, it can have the same workplace, economic, social and psychological impact as any other forms of discrimination. The experience of ageism and age discrimination that older persons experience and the unique barriers retirees face because of their age combined with their gender, disability, sexual orientation, race, colour, ethnicity, religion, culture and language. Aging is a highly individual experience and it is not possible to generalize about the skills and abilities of an older person based on age. Human rights principles require people to be given the same opportunities and benefits as everyone else, regardless of age". The Supreme Court of Canada says that it is no longer acceptable to structure systems in a way that assumes that everyone is young. Rather, the age diversity that exists in society should be reflected in design stages for policies, programs, services, facilities so that physical, attitudinal, and systemic barriers are not created. The Ontario Human Rights Commission states that "Where barriers already exist, those

responsible should identify them and take steps to remove them. It is important to remember that the experience of ageism and age discrimination may differ based on other components of a person's identity. For example, certain groups of older persons may experience unique barriers because of their age combined with their gender, ability, sexual orientation, race, colour, ethnicity, religion, culture and language."

## **Strike Support Plan:**

In its June 30<sup>th</sup> follow-up meeting, our retirees convention caucus noted it's wish to be alerted of any strike across the province. This will happen through adding our Retiree Network list to email strike alerts. ➡️ Coordination with the Strike Support committee is requested .

## **Upcoming Conferences / Events:**

The next **CUPE Ontario Retirees Meeting** will be held online November 10<sup>th</sup> at 1pm. This is our semi-annual meeting for retiree representatives of locals and district councils (as prescribed by 2019 convention resolution 45). ➡️ Enthusiastic promotion of the Nov 10th meeting by staff reps, board members and sector chairs is encouraged and will be crucial to the meeting's success.

## **Concerns in the committee:**

Most of our CUPE locals in Ontario have not keeping contact information for members retiring from the workplace. Too few staff reps are encouraging locals to keep tabs on retirees, to invite them to local meetings, to submit contact info to the Retiree Network, to form retiree committees, to send a retiree delegate to convention.

## **How Committee Work and Action Plan**

### **connect to other work of CUPE Ontario:**

All campaigns, strike support, political action work of CUPE Ontario all have an important resource in our retiree members. As detailed in para 3 above, confronting ageism and its impacts in the workplace clearly intersects with the other work of each of our equality committees.

## **Immediate needs from CUPE Ontario to move forward committee work:**

*(Resources, staff support, any other asks )*

➡ Staff reps' promotion of retiree activation at locals is key for advancing CUPE Ontario's mandate with regard to retiree members. Specifically staff guidance is required for locals to ① secure the contact information of retiring members, b) participate in the November 10<sup>th</sup> CUPE Ontario Retirees Meeting c) establish Retiree Committees and d) appoint a retiree delegate to convention.

**Other CUPE and Labour Activities:** Retirees are increasing their numbers and activism via CUPE district councils. Three local's have elected retiree representatives to the Toronto council. That council and the Niagara CUPE council have one elected retiree on their executive boards.

*(i.e. CUPE National Committees, OFL, Labour, CUPE Council, Community events)*