



ACTION PLAN

AS ADOPTED AT THE 2025 CONVENTION

CUPE Ontario Action Plan 2025

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Public goods are not so much about 'free stuff' as they are about the 'stuff that makes us free.'

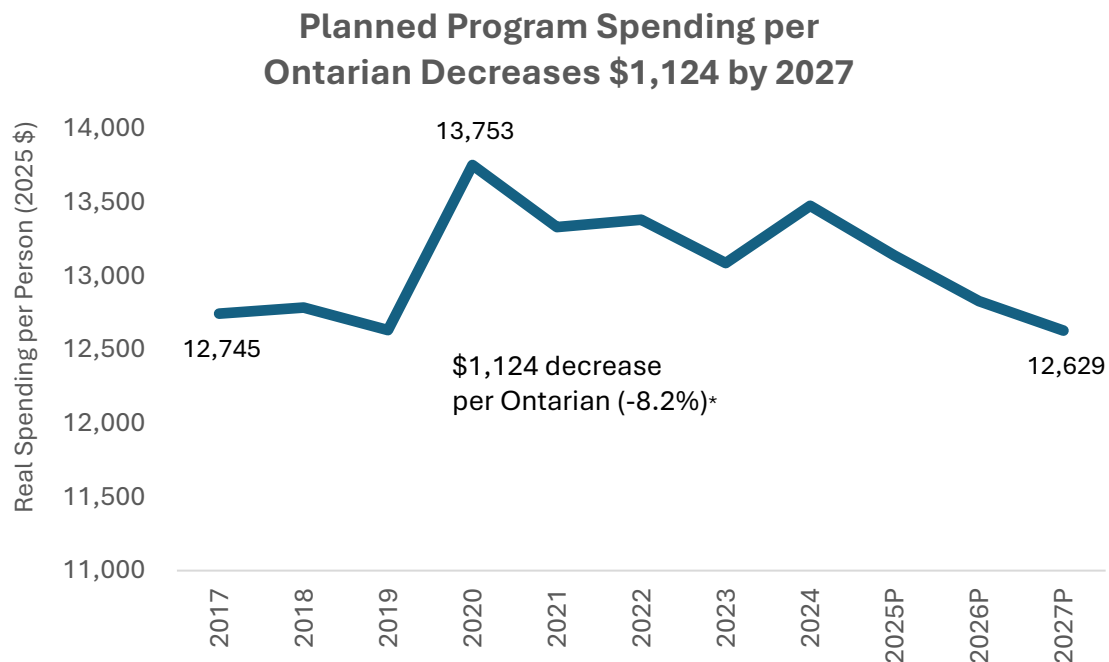
- K. Sabeel Rahman

Rise, Resist, Reclaim: Forging Our Path Forward

1. We gather under the banner "Rise, Resist, Reclaim" at a precarious moment. If you feel the ground constantly shifting beneath you, that the world seems deliberately confusing, you are not alone, and it is not accidental. This disorientation is deliberate, manufactured by billionaires and their political allies to keep us off balance, isolate us, and prevent effective resistance.
2. Globally, the authoritarian right is on the march, fueled by hatred and eager to scapegoat the vulnerable—migrants, racialized communities, trans people, and the poor. Here in Ontario, this global instability provides cover for our corporate elite; they cynically wave the flag, claiming to act for 'national interest' or 'fiscal responsibility'. It is a façade—lies meant to disguise a relentless drive to profit through privatization and the concentration of political power. They persistently invoke a myth of scarcity, all while hoarding record-breaking wealth.
3. We must understand this isn't just chaos; it's a deliberate counter-revolution against the gains won by generations of working people. They aim to erase the very ideas of the public good, social welfare, and workers' rights. We cannot merely react. We must understand the roots of this crisis in the decades of neoliberal corporatism that began in the 1980s under the likes of Reagan, Thatcher and Mulroney. Yet analysis without action is surrender. "Rise, Resist, Reclaim" is our urgent mandate.
4. We must Rise together in unbreakable solidarity, knowing our power lies not in relying on courts or politicians, but in our collective strength on the ground.
5. We must Resist disorientation, lies, and attempts to divide worker against worker, community against community. Our power is in solidarity, mobilization, organization, and direct action.
6. Crucially, we must Reclaim. Not just what we've lost but the fundamental power to shape our radically different future. This means fiercely defending our public services and recognizing CUPE Ontario members as the frontline experts delivering what our communities need. It demands a fundamental redistribution of wealth from the corporations and the rich to the working class who create it. It means building power from the ground up: workplace by workplace, community by community. This Action Plan is our roadmap for that fight.

The Austerity Lie: Starving the Public Good, Feeding Corporate Greed

7. To be clear: austerity is a political choice, not an economic necessity. It is the deliberate policy of governments to starve the public good, cut vital services like health care and education, and attack workers' wages and jobs, usually under the false claim that we “can't afford” them, even when the money exists.
8. In Ontario, a province with a trillion-dollar economy, Doug Ford's conservatives push the lie of scarcity. They claim we must tighten our belts while orchestrating budget cuts projected to slash public funding by a staggering \$18.5 billion annually by 2027. That's \$1,124 stolen from every single person compared to 2020. This is not fiscal prudence—it's class warfare waged by corporations and the elite who refuse to pay their fair share, with the aim of dismantling our public services for private profit.



*\$18.5 billion annually

Source: Ontario Public Accounts, Statistics Canada, and 2025 Budget

Venai Raniga

9. This assault on public services is also a deeply gendered and racialized attack. Who staffs our schools, hospitals, libraries, and municipalities? Overwhelmingly, women who make up 61 per cent of the Ontario Public Service, rising to 69 per cent in education and 80 per cent in health care. These sectors are also disproportionately composed of racialized workers. Attacking these jobs is an attack on economic justice and equity itself. Austerity breeds poverty and desperation, making

communities more vulnerable to illness, violence, and entanglement with the police and criminal justice system. Instead of funding ever-expanding police budgets, we must prioritize funding the conditions of life—housing, health care, education, decent work—as these are the investments that truly address vulnerability in the first place.

10. Meanwhile, note the glaring hypocrisy: governments shower corporations with billions in public money while demanding austerity from us. Look at the over \$28 billion promised for EV battery plants—subsidies creating jobs at an astronomical cost of \$4.5 million per job. This fixation on manufacturing is wrapped in nostalgia; it's a problematic attempt to evoke the bygone era of the sole breadwinner, usually a

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white male. Let's be clear: the promise of high-quality manufacturing jobs is a mirage under this government. Union density in manufacturing has plummeted, and the average manufacturing wage is now below the average overall wage in Ontario. Those jobs were only good because they were union jobs—a fact Ford actively undermines.

11. The real engine for widespread, quality employment lies hidden in plain sight: our public sector employs one in four workers in Ontario. Imagine if instead of corporate handouts, we invested those billions directly in our communities by hiring more personal support workers, education assistants, municipal staff, custodial and trades people, librarians, childcare workers, and paramedics, creating the good, unionized jobs that strengthen the public services we all rely on.
12. Public sector workers have borne the brunt of austerity before, and we are now far better prepared. We have embraced and honed a deep organizing methodology with the understanding that we're not just mobilizing for a single fight, we're building lasting power, member-to-member engagement, and the capacity for militant action. We saw this power unleashed by 55,000 OSBCU education workers, whose defiance of back-to-work legislation and staging an illegal strike in November 2022 forced the government to retreat. That victory proved our methods work and demonstrated our readiness to fight.
13. Therefore, we enter upcoming battles—at the bargaining table and in our communities—with renewed strength and resolve. We will not bargain concessions. We reject the race to the bottom. Armed with our organizing power, we will instead advance our members' interests and fight for improvements that benefit all working people.
14. Austerity is a choice. Our choice is to fight back, demanding full funding for public services and the reclamation of resources for the working class. We fight for investments in care and against the ongoing corporate plunder of the commons. This is the ground we organize on. This is how we Rise, Resist, and Reclaim.

CUPE Ontario will:

15. Combat austerity by launching campaigns against all forms of privatization, demanding significant reinvestment in public services funded by making corporations and the wealthy pay their fair share.
16. Expose corporate greed as the primary driver of inflation, pushing coordinated bargaining for major wage increases and securing full justice for Bill 124.
17. Support Locals with internal organizing, comprehensive strike resources, and solidarity actions, while supporting all efforts to expand unionization.
18. Mobilize members and partner with allies to demand housing be treated as a regulated human right, not a commodity for speculation, championing non-market solutions while fighting evictions and displacement.

This is outrageous, especially given that the richest Ontarians paid marginal rates as high as 82 per cent in the 1970s; by comparison, it is barely over 53 per cent today.

19. Vigorously defend democratic rights like protest and local control, recognizing that attacks like Bill 5 and the repeated use and threat of the Notwithstanding Clause demonstrate a clear assault on our freedoms by a

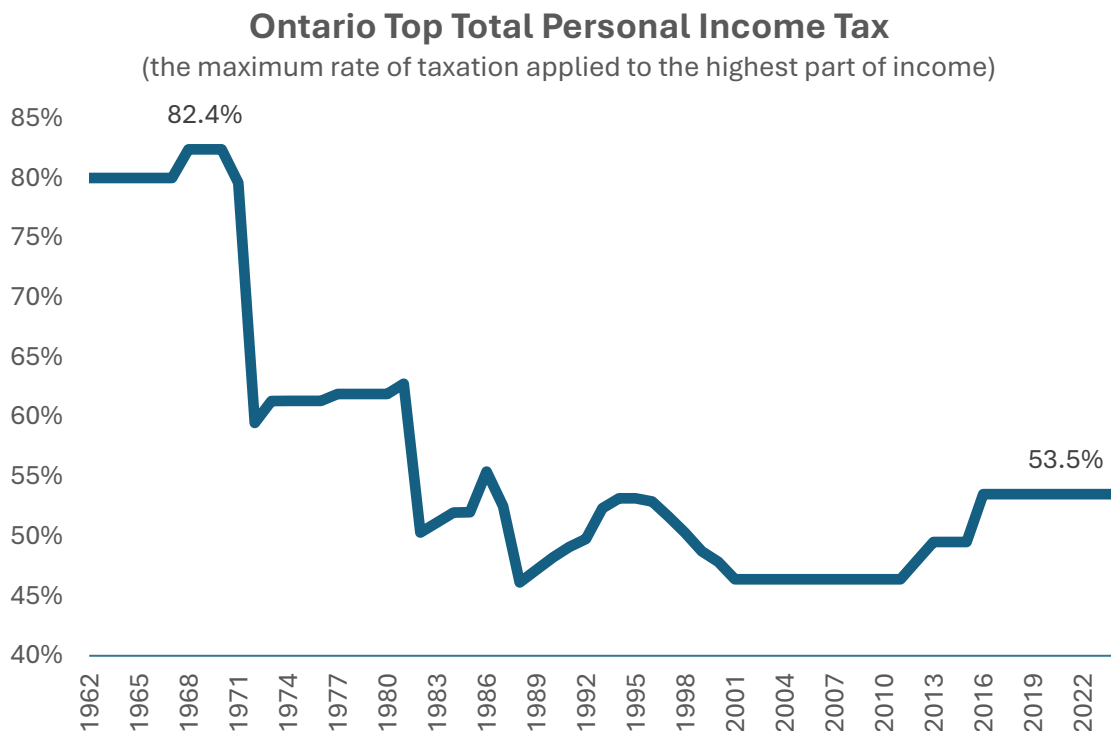
resurgent right wing seeking to silence dissent, limit public participation, and bypass fundamental safeguards; these actions demand our unwavering resistance against government overreach.

20. Proactively combat the harms of AI and technological change in public services by demanding public control over its implementation, bargaining strong protections respective of job content and job loss, surveillance, and discrimination, and fighting for legislation that safeguards quality public services, public workers' rights, and the privacy of personal information.
21. Commit to fighting for stronger health and safety enforcement, improved access to OHIP and WSIB, including for mental stress injuries, secure pensions for all, and an end to discriminatory labour laws.
22. Collaborate closely with CUPE National to demand urgent federal reform of Employment Insurance, pushing for significantly broadened eligibility, easier access, and improved benefit levels to support all workers facing rising unemployment and job losses, especially amidst challenges like the impact of recent tariffs.
23. Challenge austerity at every turn by campaigning for a living wage for all workers and demanding full funding for the public services our communities need, ensuring those resources go to working people instead of corporate coffers.
24. Champion common front bargaining across sectors to build maximum worker power and effectively confront employers.

25. Support locals and bargaining councils who are fighting against job losses as a result of the financial decisions of the Ford Conservative government including but not limited to the large jobs losses in post-secondary education among other sectors.


Taxing the Rich, Funding Our Future

26. We reject the lie that there is no money for vital public services or decent wages. That wealth exists: corporations and the ultra-rich hoard it after decades of tax cuts that starved the services we all rely on. We demand a tax system built on fairness, compelling those who have benefited most to pay their share. The truth is that this cannot continue, and it is time for a fundamental change.
27. This means significantly higher corporate taxes, especially for hugely profitable multinational corporations: no more loopholes, subsidies, or tax holidays. We need progressive wealth taxes on the fortunes of the richest one per cent to properly fund childcare, pharmacare, housing, and climate action.
28. While we demand that the rich pay more, Premier Doug Ford has recently signaled that cuts to income taxes are coming, cuts that will benefit him and his wealthy friends. This is outrageous, especially given that the richest Ontarians paid marginal rates as high as 82 per cent in the 1970s; by comparison, it is barely over 53 per cent today. They already pay far less. Taxing the rich and corporations is not punishment; it's reclaiming the wealth we all produced to build a society that works for everyone.



CUPE Ontario will:

29. Demand a fundamental overhaul of the tax system to ensure corporations and the wealthiest individuals pay a significantly greater share, ending the era of unfair loopholes and excessive corporate giveaways that starve public coffers.
30. Campaign for implementing of a dedicated wealth tax, targeting the extreme concentration of assets held by the ultra-rich.
31. Advocate for stringent government action to crack down on tax evasion and tax avoidance, including closing offshore loopholes and holding corporations and wealthy individuals accountable.
32. Insist that revenues raised through fairer taxation be directly invested in expanding vital public services that build community equity, such as affordable social housing, publicly funded and serviced transit, quality dependent care for all, universal childcare, and robust health care.
33. Mount an internal education campaign with CUPE Ontario members on the tax system, including how taxes and public revenue matter to public services, and tax fairness and how to achieve it.
34. Work closely with the Ontario NDP to develop and champion legislation that initiates a comprehensive tax review while implementing fairer taxes, including significantly increased corporate tax rates and ensuring the wealthiest pay their fair share.



We must learn from those who have mobilized against coups and elite seizures of power worldwide. This means building capacity for strikes, occupations, and widespread civil disobedience when necessary.

35. Fight for fundamental reform of municipal finances, demanding new, sustainable revenue tools beyond property taxes, and fair funding partnerships with provincial and federal governments that ensure municipalities have the resources to deliver the quality public services communities need and deserve.


Organizing: Our Power, Our Path

36. We won't win just because we are right. Victory is not an entitlement. The current political landscape shows us the stark repercussions of defeat: a comprehensive and relentless assault on public services, worker's rights, democratic norms, and human dignity.
37. Yet the very scale of these attacks creates an opportunity—even a necessity, for coalitions. We may not agree on everything, but we must fight together. While our

strength lies in our numbers, power isn't built on numbers alone. There is only power in large scale militant action.

38. We must move beyond the illusion that polite debate or lobbying alone will be enough. When governments simply ignore court orders, when the powerful act with impunity, indifferent to bad press or public scorn, what social force can stop them?

39. History, both here and internationally, holds the answer: mass movements, direct action, and the strategic withdrawal of our labour. We must learn from those who have mobilized against coups and elite seizures of power worldwide. This means building capacity for strikes, occupations, and widespread civil disobedience when necessary. Municipal workers refusing to sweep away the belongings of the unhoused, health care workers refusing to implement cuts that harm patients, educators refusing to marginalize queer and gender nonconforming youth—acts like these are examples of the resistance we must be prepared to support and initiate.



There is no substitute for the challenging work of one-on-one conversations, workplace organizing, and community building. This is our niche, and our superpower.

40. Suppression of dissenting voices—particularly the silencing of pro-Palestine voices on campuses, and the subsequent spread of these repressive tactics to municipalities—is a direct assault on our ability to organize. These are deliberate attempts to undermine forces that could act as a counterbalance to authoritarianism. Trying to appear “neutral” will not save us from repression. Neutrality in the face of

injustice sides with the oppressor. It emboldens them to expand the scope of their oppression, knowing they do not face any unified opposition.

41. We need to build a mass movement with multiple entry points, welcoming people where they are, fostering productive political debate, not acrimonious. We must move beyond social media echo chambers and reach outside our comfort zones.

42. The right builds coalitions facilitated and expanded by the use of AI and mass media, uniting tech billionaires, religious fundamentalists, conservative nationalists, and reactionary libertarians under the banner of false economic populism. Our movement must offer a genuine alternative rooted in solidarity and justice. We need to speak to people's real, material needs—their housing, health care, wages, and dignity. This means rejecting grifters peddling dubious half-measures and silver bullet solutions. There is no substitute for the challenging work of one-on-one conversations, workplace organizing, and community building. This is our niche, and our superpower. We must present bold policies that inspire and galvanize, offering resistance, and a vision of a better world.

CUPE Ontario will:

43. Continue to learn from global movements of resistance to elite power and build our union's capacity for mass action, direct action, and strategic labour withdrawal, fully supporting and defending the rights of members who refuse unsafe or unjust work, including the implementation of policies that harm vulnerable communities or undermine public services.
44. Continue and deepen mobilization of our entire membership—workers, retirees, young workers, and especially equity-deserving members—to build power and secure meaningful advancements for the working class.
45. Fully equip and empower Locals to wage militant, worker-led campaigns; provide comprehensive resources, training, and unwavering solidarity for effective strike action to confront anti-worker politicians and employers.
46. Strengthen local unions from within by providing robust support for internal organizing drives, representation votes, and facilitating effective one-on-one member communication strategies, including safely secured essential member contact information.
47. Champion and expand coordinated bargaining strategies across sectors, supporting provincial and national conferences, and highlighting successful models that leverage our collective power for better gains at the table.
48. Actively pursue our affiliation campaign to bring more Locals into the CUPE Ontario family, expanding our collective strength and political influence across the province.
49. Work with CUPE National to provide support to our CUPE councils throughout the province to help foster solidarity across communities. Continue the practice of two meetings a year for council presidents and the national staff assigned to them to assist in strengthening councils and talk about their involvement in campaign work.
50. While preserving existing bargaining structures in sectors with high union membership, such as the broader public sector, we will work to develop diverse and inclusive bargaining models, such as sectoral bargaining, to empower workers in sectors with low union density, ensuring meaningful access to unionization and collective bargaining.
51. Work with CUPE National to increase our union's membership by encouraging non-union workers to join CUPE and provide locals and district councils with the resources they need to train members in organizing and outreach. This includes promoting our “Choose CUPE” guide to help with external organizing efforts.
52. Continue to work with sectors and bargaining councils to support locals to adopt the Organizing for Power model.
53. Harness the diverse artistic talents of our members to creatively counter fascist narratives and right-wing propaganda, recognizing culture as a powerful tool for

political education and providing accessible, engaging entry points into our movement for those who might otherwise remain apolitical.

International Solidarity: Our Struggle Knows No Borders

54. Trade wars and nationalist rhetoric work to divide us. We reject the false choice between jobs in Canada and solidarity abroad. While some unions may tragically line up behind protectionist politicians promising to bring jobs “back home”—we know solidarity does not stop at the border. An injury to one is an injury to all, whether that worker is in Ontario, Sudan, Mexico, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Bangladesh, or Palestine.

55. We cannot fight ultranationalism with more nationalism. We support workers fighting for their rights and dignity everywhere. Canada’s struggle against corporate greed is inseparable from the struggle against imperialism and global exploitation.

56. This fight necessarily opposes the global war economy. We must resist ongoing efforts to pour billions more into military spending and the further militarization of borders. This money subsidizes the destruction of working people’s lives and the destruction of our planet. It is obscene that when we demand funding for public

An injury to one is an injury to all, whether that worker is in Ontario, Sudan, Mexico, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Bangladesh, or Palestine.

services, governments claim scarcity, yet they always manage to find limitless funds for the military-industrial complex. Our fight demands investment in life and care, not destruction.

57. The horrific violence unleashed upon Gaza is not a distant tragedy; it is deeply woven into the systems of oppression we fight here. We commit unequivocally against

genocide and for the rights of the Palestinian people. This means educating ourselves and challenging the weaponization of antisemitism; not only are false accusations used to silence dissent, much like the fear-mongering tactics of the McCarthy era, but they also draw attention away from a very real surge in antisemitic rhetoric and violence from the far-right. The normalization of genocide abroad makes cruelty at home seem more acceptable. We must help people unlearn damaging, ingrained worldviews that justify oppression through persistent, compassionate conversation rooted in our shared humanity.

58. Like the destructive trade deals of the past, such as NAFTA, Trump’s tariffs are tools of global capital. They want to pit workers against workers while corporations demand deeper concessions and drive a global race to the bottom, eroding worker power. The tariffs aren’t about fair trade; it’s about corporations jockeying for advantage. Our fight is not against trade itself, but against capitalism and the

corporations wielding these deals as weapons, often used to impose crushing austerity on the Global South.

59. We see this same race-to-the-bottom logic mirrored domestically in the push to dismantle "internal trade barriers." Calls of "mutual recognition" for regulations are a corporate ploy, aiming to standardize the weakest level of regulations, sacrificing hard-won safety, environmental, and worker protections for profit. Decades of neoliberal attacks have already weakened these protections, which only accelerates that process.

60. When these economic strategies fail to deliver prosperity, the right resorts to the politics of cruelty. They demonize the vulnerable, criminalizing and imprisoning migrants while scapegoating minorities; often blaming the marginalized for the crisis neoliberalism itself created. These are cynical distractions from corporate greed and the failure of government to act in the public interest. We reject this inhumanity, and

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the racism it relies on. Our solidarity extends to all workers, migrants, and oppressed peoples, here and around the world.

CUPE Ontario will:

61. Educate members on global struggles against occupation and imperialism.

62. Actively promote and build upon the strong Palestinian solidarity shown

throughout our union, including CUPE National and OHCU's unanimous demand to end military attacks on Gaza's health care workers, an end to the blockade, and an end to the genocide in Gaza.

63. Endorse the Healthcare Workers Alliance for Palestine and other civil liberties organizations' call to defend the right of all workers and community members to speak out against atrocities in Gaza without fear of harassment, discipline, or termination.

64. Oppose trade deals that exploit global workers and drive deregulation domestically.

65. Build direct links and solidarity with unions and movements internationally, especially in the Global South.

66. Actively support campaigns holding Canadian corporations—including those in the mining sector—accountable for abuses abroad, such as those in Latin America and South Africa.

67. Advocate for Canadian foreign policy centred on peace, human rights, and disarmament.

68. Connect our local campaigns to global fights against austerity and privatization.
 69. Actively combat domestic racism and xenophobia fueled by international events.
 70. Provide resources and support for Locals engaging in international solidarity work.
 71. Promote worker-to-worker solidarity missions and information sharing across borders.
 72. Educate members and amplify calls for international attention, humanitarian aid, and accountability regarding the ongoing genocide in Sudan, expressing unwavering solidarity with the affected communities.
 73. Build direct solidarity links and share strategies with public sector unions, such as American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and Federación de Sindicatos de Trabajadores al Servicio del Estado (FSTSE), in the US and Mexico to collectively resist the negative impacts of tariffs and the corporate race-to-the-bottom affecting workers across North America.
 74. Actively defend the right to dissent, particularly against the silencing of pro-Palestine voices and the spread of repressive tactics, recognizing these actions as deliberate attempts to undermine our capacity to organize against authoritarianism and affirming that neutrality in the face of injustice is complicity.
 75. Work with CUPE Nationals International Solidarity staff to advance education efforts on anti-Palestinian racism and antisemitism.
 76. Actively oppose and resist unjust deportations, working in solidarity with and advocating for the rights and safety of all migrants, refugees, and undocumented people facing removal.
 77. Promoting the new tools being developed by CUPE National to assist locals in supporting members who are having immigration issues including the threat of deportation.
 78. Affirm our unwavering solidarity with all workers impacted by global conflicts while maintaining the core tenants of trade and social unionism recognizing our shared right to live and work in peace, security, and with full human and labour rights, free from oppression and violence.
- their goal is to erase racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, and transphobia as valid explanations for inequality, dismissing them as mere insults or "woke" distractions.**

Demanding Equity

79. The escalation of attacks on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, Critical Race Theory (CRT), trans rights, inclusive education, and even basic land

acknowledgements is not random. They are part of a coordinated right-wing strategy meant to roll back decades of hard-won progress. It is a calculated and insidious effort to fracture working-class solidarity, sowing suspicion and division; their goal is to erase racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, and transphobia as valid explanations for inequality, dismissing them as mere insults or "woke" distractions.

80. This vicious campaign deliberately aims to portray marginalized people, especially Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities, as having unfairly taken opportunities from others, undeserving of public services or even the most basic forms of recognition. This undermines the fabric of our public services, which depend on diverse workforces who reflect the communities they serve and can deliver culturally competent care.
81. These attacks create hostile work environments for many CUPE Ontario members and make providing equitable services in our schools, hospitals, libraries, and municipalities harder. We must actively fight back against this atmosphere of fear by challenging disinformation and defending the right to name and dismantle systemic oppression in all its forms.

CUPE Ontario will:

82. Amplify marginalized voices while intensifying internal anti-racism work, confronting anti-Black racism and dismantling white supremacy within our union.
83. Mobilize fiercely against anti-2SLGBTQIA+ hate and legislative attacks, demanding comprehensive gender-affirming care through OHIP and bargaining.
84. Wage a forceful Pay Equity campaign addressing intersecting race/gender discrimination, pressuring the government for action and funding, demanding resources, and building strong bargaining strategies.
85. Deepen alliances with migrant justice movements demanding permanent status for all, while defending international students from exploitation.
86. Relentlessly advocate for full Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) enforcement and disability justice.
87. Uphold Indigenous sovereignty by actively supporting Land Back initiatives and the fundamental right to clean drinking water; demand that resource development, particularly in the Ring of Fire, only proceeds with the explicit Free, Prior, and Informed Consent of all affected First Nations.
88. Foster safer union spaces, combatting harassment and oppression, while ensuring targeted support reaches youth, retirees, Francophone members, and equity-deserving Locals.
89. Fight for the decommodification and public expansion of essential services like childcare, healthcare, pharmacare, and housing as fundamental rights central to equity.

90. Vehemently defend life-saving harm reduction services, including safe consumption sites, demanding full provincial funding and resisting government attempts to close or undermine these essential public health interventions.
91. Continue to advocate for the rejection of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, including demanding a withdrawal of legislation which has adopted this definition, as it equates criticism of the state of Israel as anti-Semitism and used to suppress dissent.
92. Continuing to work with our allies to fight against 'bubble zones' that limit our constitutional right to protest. We will encourage government to use public education campaigns to address the growing divisions within society that are causing incidents of hatred and intimidation.
93. Redouble our efforts to advance the work of the Anti-Racism Organizational Action Plan (AROAP) working to dismantle the structural white supremacy within our union.
94. Accomplish these goals by using an intersectional lens across our equity committees to build and strengthen solidarity in resistance to the rise of hate.
95. Encourage locals to review our bargaining guide titled, "A workplace for all. Bargaining Equality. A Workplace that Reflects the Community", to help set up Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committees within their workplaces.
96. Challenge tokenism by exposing how symbolic representation alone is insufficient and often used to placate equity-seekers, demanding instead not just symbolic representation but increased numeric representation and, crucially, the tangible political power and systemic changes necessary for genuine equity.
97. Work in steadfast solidarity with Indigenous peoples and land defenders, supporting their courageous fight against harmful resource extraction, particularly concerning the Ring of Fire, and actively engage with and support the ongoing land protection and sovereignty work of movements like Idle No More.
98. Actively support all efforts to combat femicide and gender-based violence, recognizing these as urgent human rights crises that demand collective action, education, and systemic change.
99. Affirm our profound shared humanity, grounded in the belief that every human life is precious and that all individuals deserve the chance to live in safety, dignity, and happiness, and commit to fostering a spirit of universal community.

Climate Justice is Worker Justice

100. Climate change isn't an abstraction; it's a working-class crisis. We face job insecurity from fossil fuel shifts alongside the rising costs and health risks caused by

extreme weather and worsening pollution. Our communities, often located near polluting industries, bear the brunt of these challenges.

101. The Greenbelt scandal wasn't an anomaly; it was a blatant example of how this government prioritizes corporate and personal profit over environmental protection and public trust. We see the same pattern in the push for "critical minerals"—often framed with green rhetoric that ignores the devastating environmental and social costs, particularly for Indigenous, rural and remote communities.

We reject the absurd fantasy that the market will solve the climate crisis it created.

102. We reject the absurd fantasy that the market will solve the climate crisis it created. We demand strong, binding government regulations to slash emissions. We demand massive investments in a just transition to renewable energy that will create good union

jobs. We demand accountability for the corporate neglect that caused this crisis, and which continues to pollute and poison our communities. It must be recognized that climate justice is inseparable from worker justice and Indigenous rights.

CUPE Ontario will:

- 103. Ground all climate action in justice, prioritizing workers, communities, Indigenous rights, democratic control, and opposition to the arms trade.
- 104. Vigorously oppose deregulation like Bill 185, demanding strong rules to hold corporate polluters accountable for their environmental damage.
- 105. Advocate for federally and provincially robust climate policies, supporting initiatives like the Youth Climate Corps, and pushing the NDP for bold action.
- 106. Fight for stronger OHS protections that guarantee the right to refuse unsafe work due to climate hazards and extreme weather conditions and ensure employer accommodation.
- 107. Support Locals bargaining with strong climate language for a just transition and provide resources for demanding employer climate action plans.
- 108. Build coalitions that pressure pension funds for full fossil fuel divestment, including weapons and warfare, demanding transparent climate plans and ethical reinvestment strategies.
- 109. Actively explore organizing opportunities in the renewable energy sector, bringing union power and good jobs to the green economy.
- 110. Deepen collaboration with Indigenous partners, environmental organizations, and community groups to build a broad movement for climate justice.
- 111. Strengthen internal capacity through committee reviews, exploring environmental stewardship models, and promoting sustainable practices within our union.

112. Vigorously oppose and mobilize against Bill 5 ('Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act') and its dangerous power to create 'special economic zones' where fundamental labour rights, environmental laws, and Indigenous safeguards could be eliminated by government decree.

Elections: A Tool Among Many

113. Recently, we've faced disappointing election results federally and provincially. However, despair is a luxury we cannot afford. Municipal and school board elections are on the horizon, offering crucial ground to organize, advance our ideas, and build power from the community. Think of them as laboratories for the policies we want to see implemented provincewide.

114. Yet, these vital local democratic spaces are increasingly under attack. We see continued overreach from the Ford government, which has imposed "strong mayor" legislation and threatened to take over school boards that resist its austerity agenda. This is direct interference in areas beyond provincial jurisdiction and must be fought.

115. Simultaneously, the far-right is pushing its fascist agenda into these same arenas, both by running candidates and by pressuring elected officials with extreme demands. We have seen this in demands by the so-called Strong Mayors Caucus to use the Notwithstanding Clause to clear encampments of the unhoused. We must

History shows us that the greatest advances—workers' rights, civil rights, women's rights, 2SLGBTQIA+ rights—were won not just at the ballot box, but through strikes, protests, organizing, direct action, and sustained social resistance movements.

continue to vigorously oppose the undemocratic—and often overtly fascist—demands of these groups.

116. We know that working-class people are facing a protracted struggle that we cannot afford to wage with one hand tied behind our backs. Elections absolutely matter. Governments

will be formed, laws will be passed, and budgets will be set that profoundly impact our jobs, services, and communities. Ignoring electoral politics is perilous for us as public sector workers, whose employers and funding are the government. Letting anti-worker, anti-public service forces dominate legislatures or city hall directly harms us and those we serve.

117. Therefore, a key part of our electoral work must be to educate ourselves and our members on the grift of conservative populism. We must expose how it scapegoats the vulnerable while being utterly inept in addressing the real failures of our economic system. Standing in contrast with ineffective, headline-grabbing fixes, we must champion genuine solutions.

118. However, let's be clear: elections alone are not the primary engine of social change, and never have been. This is a myth pushed by those in power to limit social change within boundaries they consider tolerable. History shows us that the greatest advances—workers' rights, civil rights, women's rights, 2SLGBTQIA+ rights—were won not just at the ballot box, but through strikes, protests, organizing, direct action, and sustained social resistance movements. Our power is built on the ground, through collective action.

119. Therefore, elections are a critical tool in our toolkit, and one terrain of struggle we must actively engage. While movement building and direct action remain central, we will participate strategically in elections. We will support progressive candidates, fight to elect allies, and use election cycles to build our capacity and advance our vision. We will never subordinate our movement to the electoral calendar, but neglecting this front would weaken our cause.

CUPE Ontario will:

120. Develop and implement an ongoing political action program to engage Local leaders and members through direct conversations and education about why electoral politics are crucial, and the vital role our union plays, especially between election campaigns.

121. Initiate early, coordinated planning for the upcoming Municipal and School Board elections, ensuring strong collaboration between the Ontario Municipal Workers Committee (OMW) and the Ontario School Boards Council of Unions (OSBCU) while actively mobilizing all other sectors for these critical campaigns.

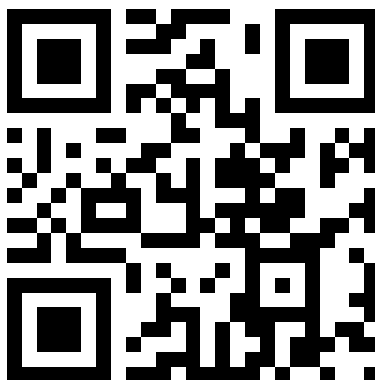
122. Leverage election cycles as prime opportunities to build member power and political capacity, providing training and support to enhance skills and encourage deep engagement beyond voting, including active volunteering in strategic campaigns.

123. Identify, train, mentor, and actively support our members to run as candidates for the NDP and progressive municipal offices, while simultaneously encouraging increased member activism within the NDP to ensure the party champions truly worker-centred policies, and commit to holding the party accountable, challenging them directly when their actions, policies, or candidates fall short of pro-worker principles.

124. Intensify our advocacy for proportional representation in our electoral system to dismantle unfair voting practices, ensuring political outcomes accurately reflect the democratic will of the people.

Reclaiming Hope: Our Vision for a Just Future

125. It's easy to feel overwhelmed but look around you. Look at the power we represent when we are united. We have a vision for a different Ontario and a different world. It's one based on solidarity, equity, and sustainability, not extraction and oppression.
126. Think about the potential of the care economy: good, meaningful, unionized jobs that strengthen our communities, proving that prosperity doesn't have to rely on polluting industries. Think about a Green New Deal, not just as a climate plan, but as a vision of abundance for the many, funded by reining in the harmful excesses of the few.
127. Mass demonstrations matter. They break through the isolation and atomization that capitalism fosters allowing us to see ourselves as part of the powerful collective that we are. They show that we are the many, and they are the few. Yet demonstrations alone are not enough. The hard work of politics isn't just in the streets, but in break rooms and community halls. We must win people over in conversation and in action, engaging them in our common cause.
128. The crises of the past twenty-five years—from wars and financial collapses to the COVID-19 pandemic and the global resurgence of fascism—have each exposed new and deeper cracks in the system we live under. Each time, the need for transformative change becomes more obvious and more urgent. Progress isn't linear. We advance, are pushed back, and then we regroup and fight again. Yet the feeling that the system is broken remains potent, waiting beneath the surface. Our task is to tap into that feeling, organize it, and channel it towards transformative change.
129. The challenges we face are immense, but our capacity for solidarity, our commitment to justice, and our power when organized are greater still. Let's leave this convention unified, energized, and ready to put this Action Plan into motion.
130. Let's Rise together against austerity and oppression. Let's Resist the attacks on our rights and services. And let's Reclaim the power and resources needed to build a future where everyone can thrive.



See the cuts in your community at: cupe.on.ca/cuts

