

January, 2015

**TO: OFL EXECUTIVE BOARD AND COUNCIL**

**PATRICK (SID) RYAN**  
President  
**NANCY HUTCHISON**  
Secretary-Treasurer  
**IRWIN NANDA**  
Executive Vice-President



## **Support of Women's Annual Memorial Marches – February 14, 2015**

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

The Ontario Federation of Labour is in full support of **Women's Annual Memorial Marches February 14, 2015** – a national day of action to honour the lives of missing and murdered women. We are writing to urge you to build support within your union and labour council for community Memorial Marches and demand a national inquiry on the hundreds of murdered and missing aboriginal women.

The OFL's 2013 convention saw over 1000 delegates rise in support of an action plan that included ongoing actions to end violence against women and, in particular, the violence against Aboriginal women.

The Memorial Marches began in Vancouver, British Columbia, twenty-seven years ago. Each year, Canada continues to see increasing deaths of many vulnerable women leaving family, friends, loved ones and community members with an overwhelming sense of grief and loss. Over 3000 women are known to have gone missing or been murdered in Canada since the 1970s. The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women issued this statement: "Hundreds of cases involving aboriginal women who have gone missing or been murdered in the past two decades have neither been fully investigated nor attracted priority attention."

The February 14th Women's Memorial March is an opportunity to come together and grieve the loss of beloved sisters and remember the women who are still missing. Each year, communities gather to mourn and remember our sisters by listening to their family members, by taking over the streets and through spiritual ceremonies.

March organizers request that supporters please respect the memorial march and the leadership of those organizing it. These events are organized and led by women because women, especially Indigenous women, face physical, mental, emotional and spiritual violence on a daily basis. They ask that you please do not bring your banners, flags, or leaflets.

On a day when many women will be celebrated with love and respect, millions will be abused, brutalized or murdered. Let's take action to support our Sisters in Canada and around the world!

The OFL is calling workers to support their community Women's Memorial March and to sign and circulate the petition of the Native Women's Association of Canada on this issue ([www.NWAC.ca](http://www.NWAC.ca)).

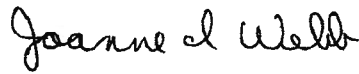
Ontario Memorial Marches scheduled to date:

List of February 14, 2015, Memorial Marches in communities can be found <http://womensmemorialmarch.wordpress.com/national>.

We can challenge violence against women and make this province, country and world a safer and better place.



Nancy Hutchison  
Secretary-Treasurer



Joanne Webb  
Vice-President, Aboriginal Persons

cc    Aboriginal Persons Committee  
      Persons with a Disability Committee  
      Human Rights Committee  
      Solidarity & Pride Committee  
      Workers of Colour Committee  
      Women's Committee  
      Young Workers Committee

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