



unifor

Ontario Regional Council

**ORC
REPORTS**

2025

ONTARIO REGIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

Samia Hashi
Ontario Regional Director

Shinade Alder, Local 6005
Chairperson

Brian Chapman, Local 27
Vice-Chairperson

Balkar Bains, Local 4457
Secretary-Treasurer

Carleen Finch, Local 87-M

Cindy Hasler, Local 504

Ayan Holland, Local 2458

Dana-Anne James, Local 6006

Jordan Lennox, Local 199

Debbie Montgomery, Local 4268

Alicia Rivera, Local 1106

Tony Sisti, Retired Workers Council
Members at Large

Greetings!

How exciting it is to welcome everyone to Unifor's 2025 Ontario Regional Council!

This past year has been nothing short of tumultuous, marked by economic uncertainty and a relentless wave of social upheavals that have tested the resilience of our membership at every turn.

From navigating the tariff and trade war initiated by the United States against Canada, to confronting systemic inequities and shifting political landscapes, we've faced challenges that could have fractured us – and we rose to the occasion, together, each and every time. In the face of adversity, we mobilized. Our bold campaign to Protect Canadian Jobs has been transformative. Together, we've rallied against outsourcing, defended our public services, negotiated for better contracts, and stood shoulder to shoulder to demand action.

In the face of corporate greed and public cuts, we've called out governments and employers alike. Because workers are nonexpendable. Because health care jobs are the lifeblood of our communities, telco jobs are the backbone of our country's infrastructure, media jobs are integral to our very democracy, and transportation and manufacturing jobs shape our industries and keep them moving. Because Unifor members build Ontario.

We've celebrated major organizing victories, turning workplace struggles into collective strength, and building a province where every worker has a voice.

In these unprecedented time, Unifor's Ontario Regional Council recognises the profound power of our union, rooted in the shared purpose of our members.

We look forward to reconnecting this weekend, to coming together to chart our shared future.

Looking ahead to 2026, we extend our heartfelt thanks for the trust you've placed in us as your Ontario Regional Council Executive. Chosen by you, we are honoured to represent your voices. Though we come from diverse sectors and regions, it is our shared commitment to defending members' rights that unites us.

As we come together this week, our focus remains clear: Protect Canadian Jobs!

In solidarity,
Your Ontario Regional Council Executive

2SLGBTQIA+ STANDING COMMITTEE

Denise Keefe, Local 222
Saul Santiago, Local 2002
Committee Members

Billy O'Neill
National Staff Liaison

During the last year we proudly participated in a series of events that amplified 2SLGBTQIA+ voices, strengthened community connections, and advocated for systemic change. Notably, our involvement in a key political rally and the coordination of several successful Pride-related events marked this season as both empowering and impactful.

1. Political Rally Participation

Event: Queer Rights Now – National Political Rally

We attended and supported a large-scale political rally advocating for the protection and expansion of rights for 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals across Canada. The event focused on:

Demanding inclusive healthcare access for trans and non-binary people.

Supporting national conversion therapy bans and enforcement.

Advocating for Two-Spirit inclusion in federal reconciliation efforts.

Calling for the inclusion of queer and trans history in educational curricula.

Key Impacts:

Joined hundreds, of demonstrators, alongside other equity-seeking groups.

Distributed educational materials and pride gear to increase awareness.

Networked with political allies and advocacy organizations to strengthen future partnerships.

2. Pride Season Highlights

The 2025 Pride season was a vibrant, affirming celebration of identity, resilience, and joy. Our programming this year prioritized intersectionality, accessibility, and representation.

Events & Activities:

Pride Parade & March:

A safe, inclusive march featuring youth, elders, and BIPOC-led groups.
Community BBQ & Resource Fair:

Connected attendees with health, housing, and mental health services.
Youth Drag Show & Art Showcase: Empowered local queer youth through performance and creative expression.
Two-Spirit Storytelling Night: Centered Indigenous queer and Two-Spirit voices in a culturally safe space.

Outcomes:

Reached attendees across all events.
Partnered with local organizations and sponsors.
Provided ASL interpretation and accessible venues for full participation.
Distributed free harm reduction supplies and resource guides.

3. Community Impact

This season deepened community engagement and raised visibility for underrepresented voices. Participant feedback reflected a strong sense of Belonging
Safe spaces for people to express their full identities.
Empowerment – Opportunities for leadership, storytelling, and celebration.
Solidarity – Collective support in advocacy and celebration across identities and backgrounds.

4. Looking Ahead

We aim to build on this momentum with year-round initiatives that support the 2SLGBTQIA+ community:
Ongoing political advocacy at the municipal and provincial levels.
Expanding support for trans youth and Two-Spirit-led programs.

Hosting educational workshops and ally training sessions throughout the year.

Conclusion

The 2025 Pride season was more than a celebration—it was a demonstration of the power of unity, visibility, and advocacy. By showing up at the political rally and leading inclusive Pride programming, we affirmed our commitment to building a future where 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals not only survive but thrive.

BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND WORKERS OF COLOUR STANDING COMMITTEE

Carrie Moffitt, Local 229
Donovan Nezbeth, Local 26
Dina Roushanroz, Local 2458
Committee Members

Hassan Mirza
Margaret Olal
National Staff Liaisons

Your ORC BIWOC committee consisting of Dina Roushanroz 2nd VP of local 2458 and chair for this year of our BIWOC committee, Carrie Moffat VP of local 229, and Donovan Nesbeth President of local 26 were elected to serve our term back in December of 2022 and it's been our pleasure serving you all the past 3 years.

Our GTA BIWOC committee proudly took part in the Black History Month celebration held on February 10 at the Jamaican Canadian centre. It was a meaningful opportunity for us to honour and reflect on the history, achievements, and resilience of Black communities, and to stand in solidarity in the fight against anti-Black racism. Our presence was symbolic and active where we connected with members, shared our ongoing initiatives, and reaffirmed our commitment to equity and inclusion.

The Windsor area BIWOC committees from locals 195, 200, 240, 444 and 2458 held our annual Black History Month event on February 15 at local 2458's hall, where our theme was Opening Doors and creating pathways for future generations. We had speakers Natalie and Shantelle Morgan enlighten us about some of the successes and struggles faced by our black youth in the education sector as well as in their own career paths. Students from Black Kids in Action spoke to us about their program which focuses on creating spaces for black youth in the arts and music departments and also shared some of the horrible racism they're still faced with in 2025. Local 2458's BIWOC committee also sponsored \$1500 to the UJIMA initiative highlighting black excellence in Windsor high schools. The ORC and local 2458 also sponsored the Emancipation Jubilee at the Caribbean centre in Windsor on August 3rd, 2025 where our chairs from local 2458, 240 and 200 were honoured to represent our BIWOC committees and spoke on the importance of emancipation and what it means to our community.

Our ORC executive board generously also donated \$5000 to the Honouring the children run for the third year in a row in recognition of National day for Truth and Reconciliation. Different locals and Carrie Moffit representing our ORC BIWOC, ran and participated in the festivities. This event has a special place in Carrie's heart as she is very passionate about empowering our Indigenous youth, but especially so, as youths from her band are benefiting directly from this fundraiser.

The ORC BIWOC and Unifor National, in conjunction with Gina Smoke also participated in another event for National day of Truth and Reconciliation at the Woodland Cultural Center in Brantford. We attended this somber event which displayed in many details, the Mohawk residential school and educated the community on the horrific events that took place on that soil at the hands of those who hid behind a guise of “helping and educating the Indigenous youth”. We provided support in the form of donations and a Unifor booth where we handed out snacks and swag to the hundreds of people who showed up from the community and engaged in many meaningful conversations. Thank you to all who supported this event from all around Ontario.

There were many other events that Unifor members organized, supported and took part in that we didn't have time to speak on because of time constraints, but we want to acknowledge and thank you all for your support and help in all that you do in your communities to keep bringing to light the importance of inclusivity and diversity, especially in a time where we see our equity is being challenged and erased. It is and will continue being a struggle for our communities to keep our seat at the table but we won't stop fighting to be seen, heard and included because we are just as important as everyone else and Unifor and all of our regional BIWOC committees will keep up the good fight, in solidarity!

EMPLOYEE AND FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM/ ADDICTIONS STANDING COMMITTEE

Yolanda Cornwall, Local 2002
Paulo Duarte, Local 26
Committee Members

Mike Byrne
National Staff Liaison

Greetings from your ORC EFAP Committee,

In 2025 our committee focused in bringing awareness to a very serious issue "Men's Mental Health".

Last year after losing our member Mike Kemp and possibly others we are not aware of due to suicide. It became our mission to start the conversation about men's mental health.

After meaningful discussions and careful planning with the support of the ORC Executive board, Mike Byrne, Niki Lindquist we developed a plan to bring this important conversation to our members.

We decided to host a pilot workshop in Windsor and we extend our sincere thanks to Local 200 and 444 for welcoming us into your home.

The theme of our event "NEVER ALONE" carried a powerful message that no one has to face this battle alone. We encouraged our members to reach out, speak up and ask for help.

Our event ran from 0900-2pm the morning began with an educational session on Men's Mental Health how to recognize the signs and symptoms and where to find resources, that men account for 75% of suicide deaths in Canada. These statistics reinforce why it was important for us to hold this workshop.

We were grateful to have support from United Way Windsor, Family Services Windsor and the Workers Health and Safety Centre. While we expected around 36 attendees, we were pleasantly surprised to welcome approximately 77 members.

During the workshop we had the honor to have John D'Agnolo Local 200 spoke about Mike Kemp and how important the conversation of Men's Mental health is for all of us. Samia Hashi address the audience and reinforced the importance of our union and coming together to have this conversation, Niki Lundquist shared a heartfelt message to members that it may be difficult to share and ask for help, but when your ready you can seek the resources, ended with thanking our members for showing up.

Trevor Mason from Local 707 and Mike Byrne National Representative and EFAP liaison, shared their personal stories. Thank you both.

Members participated by asking questions and sharing their own experiences, it was clear to everyone in the room that this was a special and much needed event.

The Men's Mental Health workshop was not only about awareness and education but also about recognizing that we are a family. After an emotional discussion, we came together for a delicious lunch-a reminder that we support one another.

As we move into the new year our goal is to bring this initiative across Ontario and continue this vital conversation.

"NEVER ALONE" -Let's talk about Men's Mental Health.

"One Kind word can change someone's entire day".

In Solidarity,

Yolanda Cornwall, Paulo Durate, Mike Byrne

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE/ CANADA PENSION PLAN STANDING COMMITTEE

Dwayne Gunness, Local 40
Stephan Cronin, Local 88
Committee Members

Lisa Contini
Erin Harrison
National Staff Liaisons

The EI-CPP Extended Committee members include Paul Ivey (Local 707), Ken Kwaitkowski (Local 444), Jeanine Noseworthy (Local 1285), Mile Rafuse (Local 222), John Burnett (Local 1459), Della Rogers (Local 651), Erin Harrison (National Staff), Cammie Pierce and Dean Lindsay (Retired National Staff).

The EI-CPP Committee continues to play a vital role in educating and empowering members about changes affecting social programs that support workers through periods of unemployment, retirement, and transitions such as moving between jobs, plant closures and shifting into retirement or new forms of work.

The 2025 EI-CPP Conference was an outstanding success, drawing broad participation from across Canada. The sessions fostered meaningful dialogue on key issues such as the new Board of Appeals and Labour Adjustment Action Centres. Feedback from participants underscored the practical value of the sessions and importance of continued advocacy on these critical topics.

Over the past year, the economic landscape has been heavily influenced by ongoing tariff disputes and related trade disruptions. Sectors such as manufacturing, steel and supply

chain dependent industries have faced significant slowdowns, resulting in layoffs, reduced work hours and heightened insecurity for working families. The ripple effects of these tariffs have prompted the federal government to introduce temporary income support measures. This was a welcome step but just emphasizes the need for deeper, lasting reform.

The Committee continues to advocate for a permanent modernization of the Employment Insurance system that will allow easier access and greater coverage for all workers, especially those in precarious or transitioning sectors.

As we look ahead, The EI-CPP Committee's focus remains strong. We want to ensure that both the EI and CPP systems continue to protect workers and retirees, strengthen income security, and uphold the principle that every Canadian deserves stability and dignity throughout their working life and beyond.

CPP UPDATE

The Canada Pension Plan (CPP) has continued to undergo changes to enhance benefits and improve fairness. As of January 1, 2025, new measures include a top-up death benefit that provides \$5,000 to the estate of a contributor who dies without a surviving spouse or partner, as well as a new benefit for dependent children aged 18–24 who are in part-time studies. The CPP has also extended eligibility for the Disabled Contributor's Child's Benefit beyond age 65 and adjusted survivor pension rules to exclude individuals who have already split credits with a former spouse. On the financial side, the CPP enhancement continues to phase in, increasing the income-replacement rate and introducing a second earnings ceiling, so higher-income earners now contribute more and receive proportionally higher benefits. All CPP benefits remain indexed to inflation, ensuring they keep pace with the cost of living.

EI UPDATE

As Unifor continues to lobby government to enact EI Reform that benefits all workers across the country, recent developments directly related to the impact of the tariff imposition has resulted in the announcement of a suite of temporary EI measures beginning October 12, 2025 which include (a) waiving the one-week waiting period (for claims established between March 30, 2025 and April 11, 2026). (b) Suspending the treatment of separation pay for claims established between March 30, 2025 and April 11, 2026. (c) Extra weeks of EI Benefits for Long-Tenured workers who may need more time to find a job, gives an extra 20 weeks of income support up to a maximum of 65 weeks.

Under the new EI temporary measures, payments received through the Wage Earner Protection Program (WEPP) during this window will not be allocated as earnings when considered as pay for previous hours worked or separation pay. This change means that workers who receive WEPP due to their employer's bankruptcy or receivership can continue to collect EI benefits without any impact. WEPP provides a one-time payment equivalent to approximately seven weeks of the EI maximum weekly insurable earnings to a maximum payment of \$8,844.22 for 2025. Improvements to this program are vital as it falls far short in assisting long-tenured workers who lost their job through no fault of their own.

Efforts for ongoing EI Reform including making the current EI Temporary Measures permanent will go a long way in considering the realities of today's labour market.

SAVE THE DATE

The EI-CPP Committee is excited to announce that the next EI-CPP conference will take place at the Unifor Family Education Centre in Port Elgin from Thursday, June 18 to

Sunday, June 21, 2026. Please save the date and do not forget to register for this informative conference!

HEALTH SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT STANDING COMMITTEE

**Paul McKee, Local 4268
Cheri Deguire, Local 598
Committee Members**

**Emil Mesic
National Staff Liaison**

Your Ontario Regional Health and safety committee has had a busy year. Last years, fundraiser where we sold shirts with the profits being donated to the Threads of Life. Threads of life provide important victim services to families of workers that were killed on the job. The shirts raised awareness of workers Right to Refuse unsafe work. Members of the committee participated in the Threads of Life Walk and was able to donate \$ 3000 in monies raised to the Threads of Life.

October 3-5, 2025, the Ontario Regional Health and Safety committee also attended the Healthcare Conference in Port Elgin. 185 healthcare members attended. A presentation on Cytotoxins was presented. It brought awareness and understanding of the hazards, the effects, exposures and prevention measures to be taken. Cytotoxins are a group of medicines that are toxic to human cells, preventing their replication and growth. These drugs and their disposal present risks to Health care workers. They also present risks to our Waste Industry workers and all those who encounter cytotoxins.

A presentation by Sherri Bastos from the Public Services Health and Safety Association was given on Workplace Violence. Discussions focused on the importance of reporting incidents, near misses and the responsibilities of the Joint Health and Safety Committee. The importance of working jointly with the company and the Joint Health and Safety Committee creating policies and procedures. The Co-operation between the workers and employers in identifying and assessing hazards is the foundation of a successful Violence Prevention Program.

POLITICAL ACTION STANDING COMMITTEE

Melissa Holden, Local 636
Maria Chinelli, Local 222
Jamie Gilbert, Local 2027
Committee Members

Josh Coles
National Staff Liaison

As 2024 wrapped up, the Ontario Regional Council's Membership Mobilization and Political Action team was busier than ever, preparing for the spring elections. We were attending rallies, planning events, and speaking with members about everything that matters to you in these crazy times.

And in 2025, we hit the ground running with 10 book-offs and a texting campaign that reached 50,000 members in Ontario. GOTV (Advanced) resulted in 44,164 initial texts sent with a 12% response rate, and GOTV (E Day) resulted in 70,713 initial texts sent with a 10% response rate. With a win rate of 81% for the ridings that our teams worked on. We accomplished this in just three weeks before the provincial election in February.

This was closely followed by a Federal election on April 27. Prime Minister Trudeau's sudden resignation spurred an earlier-than-anticipated election. During this election period, we had 78 book-offs from 11 provinces. We knocked on doors, called, and texted members to "get out the vote". 54 Unifor Volunteer Targets: 34 wins (63% win rate); and 25 Unifor E Day Targets: won 19 Liberal ridings (76% win rate). More importantly, we successfully assisted in unseating Pierre Polievre in Carlton, achieving a Liberal minority government when, in December, we all believed a conservative Federal Government was all but decided.

We attended committee meetings and events, including International Women's Day and Pride. We were present at membership meetings and retiree meetings. We were on picket lines and at protests. And what we heard was, "Why do our governments not protect us, why does it seem like they don't hear us, why don't they protect our jobs, and look out for what matters to us like healthcare and retirement?"

Those are great questions, and the answer is we need to demand it from them. We need to lobby and campaign, and then expect them to answer our questions. This is precisely why Unifor is involved in politics, why Unifor has a voice at the table, and why we continue to fight every day for each other and all workers in this province.

People in positions of power, such as politicians, often shape how we, as the working and middle classes, perceive our own situation. This can lead us to believe that certain laws and policies are helping us, even when that's not really the case. Over time, this way of thinking

can make us more likely to accept government actions, even if those actions are unfair. The stories we hear through news, social media, political speeches, and government choices, or even their silence, can all influence our perspective. As a result, we begin to perceive our interests as being the same as those of the wealthy and powerful, even when their needs are vastly different.

We are not going to tell anyone how to vote, but what we will say to you is vote in favour of who you believe has your best interest at heart. Parties funded by big businesses are not in your best interest, as their primary goal is to maximize profit by earning the most money from the labour you sell them.

The election of the new president in the U.S. has led to job losses and widespread concern among us. Simply put, he is a bully. He is demanding that manufacturing pack up here in Canada and “return” to the United States. Return? There is nothing to return to. They weren’t their jobs to begin with. These jobs are our jobs, and we will fight for every last one of them. Lana and our fearless leadership team are standing up to him and his trade war and will not back down until we have job security and a future for all workers in Canada.

In the fight for these jobs, we have been walking picket lines with Blue-Line Taxi in Ottawa, Titan Tool in Windsor, and all places in between. We encourage all members to join these solidarity pickets to demand that employer’s bargain fairly and keep Canadians employed. The continued tariffs and their implications are a dire threat to workers. Trade agreements must protect all sectors and recognize Canada’s vital importance as an industrialized and diverse economy.

However, the fight isn’t just with industry; it is with healthcare and social services, and the impending austerity plans we perceive are being strategically and systemically implemented to marginalize once again and stereotype healthcare and social service workers by limiting their bargaining power and capitalizing on the limited ability of these sectors to strike for their rights to fair wages and improved working conditions. There are so many more fights to fight from the Ontario Regional Council, and we will not leave a voice unheard.

Overall, the Membership Mobilization and Political Action Committee in Ontario continues to fight for workers' rights on the front lines and through more formal lines of political advocacy, ensuring that the voices of working people are heard and represented in policy decisions that shape their livelihoods and communities.

WOMEN'S STANDING COMMITTEE

Sarah-Kai Antanaitis, Local 5555
Emily Coulter, Local 1106
Melissa Wood, Local 598
Committee Members

Kat Leonard
Saira Chhibber
National Staff Liaison

Since the last Ontario Regional Council, our committee members have been active in their communities and the Union.

In January 2025, Sarah-Kai began her new Union position as VP of her Local.

In March, the committee members joined local initiatives for IWD 2025. Sarah-Kai's local hosted an open house and collected menstrual products to donate to Interval House, a women's shelter in Hamilton. Emily's local hosted an IWD dinner at local 1106. They also collected menstrual products and donated them to a local women's shelter. On March 5th Melissa joined community activists in Sudbury for a screening of the documentary, "How Feminist Media Changed the World" at Indie Cinema. She also participated in the Period Promise Campaign with the United Way in Sudbury.

Also in March, Sarah-Kai participated in basic Discussion Leader training in Port Elgin and since then has been trained to facilitate Grievance Handling and Women's Activist. She facilitated her first Grievance Handling 3-day area school in October this year. Emily has been the Discussion Leader for several courses this year.

During the federal election, Melissa participated in two Women's Canvas' in London, ON for our very own Shinade Alder and federal candidate Lindsay Mathysen.

Over the summer, Emily and Sarah-Kai's Locals collected school supplies for deserving low-income families in their local communities.

In September, members of the committee also participated in their local Take Back the Night rallies and marches. Along with our participation, Unifor Local 5555 also donated \$1k to the Sexual Assault Centre of Hamilton (SACHA).

This year, the committee is focusing on the IPV Bill 55 in Ontario. To date, we have had a strategy meeting with Samia and Tracey where we discussed what we would like to do. Our committee made the decision to lobby MPPs to advance the Bill. We are also connecting with our community IPV/Domestic Violence networks to ensure we are representing the folks who work in the IPV field as well as survivors when we visit with MPPs. We have also written to our MPPs to urge them to advance Bill 55 in the legislature and encourage all of

our members to do the same. Please visit <https://www.unifor.org/campaigns/all-campaigns/declare-intimate-partner-violence-epidemic> to participate in the campaign. For the Ontario Regional Council, our plan is to present a report on the Economic state of Women in Ontario/Canada. We know that the economic state of women plays a big part in making a decision to leave an abusive relationship.

In solidarity,
Melissa Wood, Chair
Emily Coulter
Sarah-Kai Antanaitis

WORKERS COMPENSATION STANDING COMMITTEE

Rob Gallace, Local 88
Ashok Venkatarangam, Local 100
Committee Members

Ryan Rodrigues
National Staff Liaison

The Worker's compensation committee has been forging ties and supporting injured workers groups in Ontario to fight for injured workers. The Health and Safety Department is in the process of building a WSIB guide to assist injured workers. This Guide will be rolled out in 2026 and the WSIB committee is looking forward to presenting this tool to locals through educational webinars in 2026. The Worker's Compensation committee along with injured worker advocates are lobbying the Ontario government to stop age discrimination of injured workers from claim benefits past the age of 65. According to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (WSIA), injured or ill workers only have access to WSIB Loss of Earning (LOE) benefits until Age 65 or for a maximum of two years if they experience injury or illness at Age 63 or older.

The University of Regina publishes an annual report on work fatality and injury rates in Canada, with the latest available being the 2023 report. Recent reports have highlighted that workplace fatalities remain high and have identified trends in specific provinces. Reports also note the data limitations and delays from the [Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada \(AWCBC\)](#) and the importance of considering both traumatic injuries and occupational diseases. The reports are often published on research and news sites, such as [ResearchGate](#) and [Canadian Occupational Safety](#). The most important statistic from this report is the findings that Worker fatalities have not declined.

The Westray Mine disaster occurred in Nova Scotia on May 9, 1992, killing all 26 miners working underground. The preventable tragedy led to the [Westray Bill \(Bill C-45\)](#), which amended the Criminal Code to create legal accountability for corporations and their executives in cases of workplace deaths and injuries due to negligence. Since Bill C-45 was enacted there has been approximately 27 charges and 12 successful prosecutions under the law.

In Ontario, Workers continue to experience injuries, Occupational illness and fatalities in the workplace while approval of claims continue to decline. The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) has chosen to make employers wealthier by billions of dollars each year through rebates and rate cuts. There have been no significant changes in support for injured workers.

[Bill 118 - Injured Workers Day Act](#) was passed in 2024 and created a new annual day, Injured Workers Day. June 1st 2025 was the first year that Injured Workers Day was officially recognized in Ontario. Workplace injuries profoundly affect workers, their families and their communities. Injured Workers Day serves as an opportunity for to recognize the individuals who have been injured at work or who have suffered injuries as a result of their workplace conditions. This is a day to bring awareness to issues of workplace injury and the plight of injured workers, and to demonstrate a commitment to workplace injury prevention and remediation. Making Injured Workers Day June 1st annually in Ontario ensures our long-term struggles remain visible.

The Worker's Compensation Committee has formulated a demand letter to the Minister of Labour, the Honorable David Piccini to make legislative changes. We are seeking change that will address well-known gaps that injured workers face.

We request that delegates review our demand letter and join our campaign by scanning the QR Code and submit a copy of our demands to the Minister of Labour. We also encourage you to forward this QR code to have members in your local also fill out the demand letter. Together we can build solidarity and let our government know that they need to restore a Workers Compensation system that operates according to its founding principles.

The following is the demand letter:

Hon. David Piccini
Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills
Development
Via Email

Dear Minister Piccini,

I am writing to request important legislative changes to Ontario's workers' compensation system put forward by our members. These amendments could be included in a new Working for Workers Act as amendments to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (WSIA).

Study after study show that permanently injured and ill workers face poverty, stigma, and a cascading set of health effects that can cause people to lose their homes, their families, and the lives they once knew. Instead of addressing this known problem, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) has chosen to make employers \$6.5 billion wealthier while also reducing Employers premium rate down from \$1.30 in 2024 to \$1.23 by 2026 – eligible businesses are expected to receive a credit equivalent to about 61% of their 2024 reported premiums.

While significant amounts of money has been given back to employers through these various channels, there have been no significant changes in support for injured or ill workers. This money could have been more effectively used to reinforce and update the

current systems deficiencies that have been identified for years by Unifor and Injured Workers groups across Ontario.

We are seeking your help to address well known gaps that injured workers face and we insist these changes are implemented to restore a workers' compensation system that operates according to its [founding principles](#).

We ask you to make legislative changes that:

1. Restore access for unionized workers who have been injured at work to utilize the education, resources, and services from the Office of the Worker Advisor.
2. Restore the Loss of Earnings benefits rate to at least 90% of net pre-injury earnings for all injured and ill workers – with no cap on earnings;
3. Eliminate the age 65 restrictions on Loss of Earnings benefits;
4. Eliminate deeming and base wage loss benefits on actual loss of earnings, not on phantom jobs and invented wages;

We look forward to seeing legislative changes that will correct these injustices and request to meet on a regular cadence with your team to discuss our members concerns. Together, we can collaborate for a workers' compensation system that is effective, efficient, and most importantly fair.

WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES STANDING COMMITTEE

Jacqueline McIntosh, Local 79-M
Andrea Henry, Local 112
Melanie Forget, Local 5025
Committee Members

Dana Dunphy
National Staff Liaison

On December 3rd, we will honor the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, a day established by the United Nations to promote understanding and support for individuals with disabilities. We encourage everyone to share their stories to foster change and learning within our caucuses.

We are considering inviting a speaker from the ONIWG organization to our ORC caucuses to discuss retention and accommodation in the workplace. Additionally, we aim to lobby for key disability-related issues at Queen's Park, backed by a resource checklist created with ONIWG.

Our regional WWD committees are identifying barriers to participation in union functions and are working to ensure accessibility and inclusion at future events. We are awaiting approval of the Inclusive Practices Tool Kit, which will be distributed once finalized.

We plan to promote our Workers with disABILITIES logo by producing T-shirts and other promotional materials, collaborating with like-minded committees to reduce stigma and raise awareness. Our support extends to attending rallies and marches within Unifor and with other organizations advocating for inclusive workplaces.

Jesse Zesseu at the 2024 Unifor Ontario Regional Conference

The 2024 Unifor Ontario Regional Conference allowed us to complete important resolutions. Our WWD resolution is now part of the Unifor by-laws, establishing WWD Committees in all locals.

A highlight was Jesse Zesseu, a silver medallist at the 2024 Paris Paralympics, who joined the Workers with disABILITIES Caucus for a meaningful conversation. Topics included living with invisible disabilities and the financial disparities between Paralympic and Olympic athletes.

We thank Dana Anne James, Derek Macleod, the Communications Department, and all Ontario Regional staff for supporting Jesse's participation. Jesse's message of patience and perseverance was truly inspiring.

YOUNG WORKERS STANDING COMMITTEE

James Chilcott, Local 88
Angelyn Francis, Local 87-M
Max Ramsey, Local 200
Committee Members

Laura Sullivan
Ryan Rodrigues
National Staff Liaison

End-of-Year Report – January to December 2025

As 2025 comes to a close, the Young Workers Committee is proud to look back on a year full of growth, collaboration, and some pretty big wins for young people in our union. Our committee's mission has always been clear — to empower, educate, and raise awareness about the challenges young workers face in today's ever-changing world. This year, we not only kept that promise but continued to build a stronger voice for youth across Unifor.

Highlights of the Year

One of our biggest achievements this year was securing a Paid Education Leave (PEL) course dedicated specifically to young worker activism. This new *Young Worker Activist Course* was scheduled for late November, and we couldn't be more excited to see it come to life. It's a major step toward giving young members the tools and confidence to become active leaders in their locals and communities.

Back in February, we helped co-facilitate a Black History Month celebration alongside Locals 195, 240, 444, and 2458. The event brought together about 70 participants, including inspiring youth and respected elders who shared stories, experiences, and messages of solidarity. It was a beautiful day of learning, connection, and community. Each local contributed donations that went toward educational programs for local youth — a wonderful example of what we can accomplish when we come together.

Throughout the year, we also continued to advocate for youth engagement within the union. Whether it was encouraging locals to involve more young members in events, hosting socials at the local level or supporting new voices stepping up in leadership roles, we've seen real progress and enthusiasm across the board. It's proof that the future of Unifor is not just bright — it's bold, curious, and ready to make change.

Challenges Along the Way

Of course, it hasn't all been easy. Like many workers across Canada, young people have been hit hard by broader economic challenges — from tariffs and layoffs in the auto industry to rising inflation and the skyrocketing cost of housing. Youth unemployment continues to be a real concern, making it even more important that we keep pushing for fair

opportunities, stronger protections, and a seat at the table for young workers. These challenges remind us exactly why our work matters.

Looking Ahead

As we turn the page to 2026, our focus remains on empowering and educating young workers both inside and outside the union. We want to see even more youth participation at events, on committees, and in leadership roles. We want to bring back our Young Workers Conference. We'll keep pushing for spaces where young workers can learn, connect, and share their stories — because when young voices are heard, our entire union grows stronger.

In Closing

2025 has been a year of learning, leadership, and community for the Young Workers Committee. From hosting meaningful events to paving the way for future training and activism, we've built something to be proud of. Most importantly, we've continued to remind young workers that their voices matter — not just for the future of Unifor, but for the future of Canada's labour movement.

Here's to another year of growth, solidarity, and youth-driven change.

In solidarity,
Max Ramsey, Angelyn Francis, Jamie Chilcott