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Ontario Regional Council

**ORC DIRECTOR
RECOMMENDATIONS**

2025

Recommendation #1

Protecting Canadian Jobs; Building a Resilient Economy

The Trump Administration's unjustified and illegal tariffs on Canadian exports are intended to weaken critical domestic industries through "economic force." This U.S.-provoked trade war is already threatening Canadian jobs and investment, causing major economic uncertainty, and directly impacting Unifor members and all workers.

U.S. tariff actions are an attack on Canadian sovereignty, signaling a drastic and dangerous turn in the peaceful relations between two historic allies. Tariffs can be used to address unfair trade practices globally, but there is no justification for the U.S. to impose national security or emergency tariffs on Canada.

In the face of unprovoked U.S.-led trade attacks, Canada has no choice but to defend its jobs and economic interests. Unifor's 120,000 members in trade-exposed industries are on the frontlines of this attack, including in Canada's manufacturing, energy, metal, mining, forestry, and transportation sectors. However, as aggressive, and erratic U.S. tariff implementation plunges Canada and the world into possible recession, all workers – including those in public health care, education and other services will feel the effects.

We also know that the combined impact of trade tariffs and counter tariffs from the United States and China is threatening to divide our country by region and industry at a time when we need to come together more than ever. Workers in Canada must be in this fight together and we must fight for all workers and all industries, together.

This trade dispute has made one thing clear: Canada's relationship with the United States has forever changed. For the sake of our national sovereignty, Canada now must chart a new course to preserve our own self-interest, to protect and grow good, union jobs and build stable, thriving industries.

Canada's role must also be to defend the basic tenets of democracy. Unifor is working with governments and all stakeholders to navigate the immediate tariff crisis and find a permanent and durable resolution. We need action and retaliatory action where needed, not words or piecemeal deals.

I therefore recommend that Unifor Ontario Regional Council:

1. Fully participate in Unifor's Protect Canadian Jobs campaign by encouraging all members to take the 'Unifor Made' pledge and identify the goods and services they provide to Canadians so the National Union can promote widely.
2. Advocate for all levels of government to use a range of strong and strategic countermeasures, including retaliatory tariffs, to defend workplaces, eliminate incentives for business to relocate out of Canada, and penalize firms should they choose to do so.
3. Coordinate discussions among local unions, industry councils, and with government officials and

key stakeholders to promote Unifor's call for big, bold economy-building ideas in the face of U.S. aggression, and to consider other sector-specific ideas as part of comprehensive industrial strategies that deliver a more self-sustaining, inclusive and resilient economy for all.

4. Commit to closely monitoring tariff-related workplace impacts in every regional Unifor-represented workplace, share that information with the National Union and prepare to respond, by any means necessary, to prevent the relocation of production or permanent loss of jobs.
5. Support calls to action by helping locals mobilize members to protect and defend Canada jobs at all opportunities.

Recommendation #2

Defend and Transform Canada's Forestry Sector

Unifor's 24,000 forestry sector members – including more than 4,000 in Ontario – work in a variety of forestry, logging, and firefighting occupations as well as wood product, bioenergy and pulp and paper manufacturing facilities.

Ontario's forestry sector continues to experience a perfect storm of repeated and intersecting crises, and a combination of economic, environmental, and global challenges continues to destabilize the broader sector.

The ongoing softwood lumber dispute and the threat of further tariffs have intensified a trade war that are causing disastrous repercussions across the forestry sector. Earlier this year, the United States Department of Commerce raised combined preliminary softwood duties on Canadian softwood lumber to 34.45%.

The U.S. government has subsequently imposed new Section 232 tariffs on Canadian softwood lumber, effective as of October 14, 2025, adding a 10% tariff on top of the existing softwood duties, resulting in total duties/tariffs exceeding 45%.

In addition, every season, wildfires pose a serious threat to our forests, forestry operations, and communities that depend on forestry. Important conservation measures, including species and habitat protection efforts, continue to complicate long-term planning for the sector.

These financial challenges and other pressures have frozen investments in Ontario's forestry sector and threatened the economic viability of many of our workplaces. Forestry workers and their families are struggling with layoffs, curtailments and closures, and Ontario's forestry-dependent communities face an uncertain future.

I therefore recommend that Unifor Ontario Regional Council:

1. Continue to push all relevant Ministers in the federal government, and the Ontario government to coordinate a "Team Canada" strategy to support the forestry sector and its workers, beginning with immediate income supports for those facing curtailments and layoffs, and emergency financial assistance to keep mills operating through the tariff crisis.
2. Support the development of a national industrial strategy for forestry that reduces Canada's historic dependence on exports, prioritizes domestic processing and value-added production, continued follow-through campaigning for a Made-in-Canada housing policy strategy to leverage Canadian wood to develop affordable wood-based housing and component construction; and
3. Commit to continue defending and grow our forestry sector by working in solidarity with Indigenous partners, industry stakeholders, and governments at all levels to ensure a more sustainable, innovative, and inclusive future—one that puts Canadian wood to work for Canadians and ends our vulnerability to foreign economic aggression.



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