Unifor applauded the Federal government’s introduction of Bill C-16, which seeks to extend human rights and secure full legal protection for transgender people by enshrining gender identity and gender expression in Canadian law.

“The fact that the government announced the bill and did so on May 17, the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, is a good sign,” said Unifor National President Jerry Dias.

While the inclusion of gender identity in the Canadian Human Rights Act has been in the making for more than a decade, this is the first time such legislation is being proposed by a sitting government. Previously a similar
Convention 2016 Updates

Deadlines for this summer’s national convention are fast approaching – especially for any locals hoping to submit a resolution.

Unifor holds its second Convention to be held August 22 – 26 at Shaw Centre in Ottawa. Until then, watch this space in your national newsletter for updates on what is planned, and for pending deadlines.

Join Unifor for Ottawa’s PRIDE parade at convention on Sunday, August 21, 1-3 p.m. Allies are encouraged to attend and show support for all lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender workers.

The parade starts on Bank Street in downtown Ottawa.

• Registration deadline is July 22.
• Industry Councils will be held August 21.
• A new delegates orientation will be held the evening of August 21.

For details, go to unifor.org/events.

Uniforum is published every two weeks by Unifor, Canada’s largest union in the private sector.

Reach us at:
Uniforum
Unifor Communications
205 Placer Court, Fifth Floor
Toronto, Ontario, M5H 3H9

1-800-268-5763
communications@unifor.org

www.unifor.org

ORPP addresses retirement income crisis

Unifor commends the Ontario government for the significant contribution the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan will make to the retirement income security of Ontarians. Ontario is introducing the only major social program in Canada in many years.

Unifor believes that in absence of CPP reform, the ORPP is an essential step in addressing the looming retirement crisis facing workers today.

“Workers can no longer rely on employers for retirement security,” said Unifor Ontario Regional Director Katha Fortier. “In the private sector less than 25 per cent of Canadians have a workplace pension plan. Additionally the growth in precarious work means no pension for far too many, especially young workers and immigrant workers."

That’s the message Fortier delivered recently at the Standing Committee on Social Policy hearings on Bill 186: An Act to establish the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan.

The workplace is changing. Fewer Ontarians can expect to stay with one employer and collect a pension from that employer at the end of their work career. Most Canadians struggle to save sufficiently for retirement and the result is that today’s workers will face a significant decline in their standard of living in retirement.

“Many young people will have a worse pension than their parents or grandparents,” said Fortier. “The Ontario government has recognized the retirement income problem and is proposing a sensible solution.”

Public pensions are necessary to fill the gap in workplace pensions. The CPP has been extremely successful at providing retirement income for Canadians, but the benefits are set too low with an average 2015 CPP benefit of $550. The situation is particularly grim for women as they receive just two-thirds of the benefit for men.

Unifor is committed to changing the perception of what it means to be a tradesperson.

Unifor is committed to changing the perception of what it means to be a tradesperson.

trades and manufacturing industries, and we hope that this generous initiative by Unifor and Coca-Cola Refreshments Canada will encourage more women to consider this exciting career path,” said Dr. Jeff Zabudsky, Sheridan’s President and Vice Chancellor.

The scholarships will be awarded based on a number of factors, including financial need, and will be open to any woman enrolled in one of Sheridan College’s six trades programs or two post-graduate manufacturing management programs including: Electrical Engineering Technician, Mechanical Technician – Tool Making, Mechanical Techniques – Plumbing, Mechanical Techniques – Tool and Die, Welding Techniques, Quality Assurance – Manufacturing and Management, and Manufacturing Management.

“I want to congratulate Unifor, Coca-Cola and Sheridan College for helping 15 young women have better access to valuable training,” said Brampton Mayor Linda Jeffrey.

“Unifor is committed to changing the perception of who a skilled tradesperson is, to one based on competency and not gender,” said Unifor National President Jerry Dias.
The pipeline’s proposed path near the Fraser River, which generates unacceptable risks of a spill that could be catastrophic to the commercial fishery.

Unifor contends that a well-managed petroleum industry can provide good, stable jobs and create wealth for producing communities and all Canadians. This is a key concern especially given the recent fire in Fort McMurray and the need for non-renewable resources to translate into overall employment and income as soon as possible.

In the absence of any realistic, enforceable regulations Unifor indicated that the NEB failed to consider the very serious risks a project of this magnitude has for residents and our economy.

Anti-harassment Statement

The Human Rights and International Department recently updated Unifor’s Anti-harassment statement. Unifor’s statement sets an important tone about creating and preserving a safe harassment-free environment in the workplace and at all union activities, events and meetings.

One thing that every local, member and retiree can do is to lead by example, read out the statement at your next union meeting. Here’s the new statement: unifor.org/anti-harassment.
In this issue Unifor applauds the federal government’s move to extend human rights and secure full legal protection for transgender people. New harassment policy available for download. Supporting more women getting into the trades. Convention updates. Public pensions. Unifor members do well at journalism award ceremonies.

Pulp and paper unions meet to develop bargaining strategy

Unifor and the Public and Private Workers of Canada (PPWC) met recently in Vancouver to prepare for bargaining in 2017. This was the third joint meeting of the two largest unions in Canada’s pulp and paper sector.

“It has been a great experience, bringing our two groups together again. We have formed a cohesive bond that will serve us well in the next round of bargaining. In unity there is strength,” said Gary Fiege, Second Vice President of PPWC.

PPWC and Unifor have bargained separately since 2002 but have agreed to work together in the future. The groups already work cooperative on the Pulp and Paper Industry Pension Plan and the Pulp and Paper Safety Conference. The PPWC represents thousands of workers across British Columbia.

Unifor met recently with the PPWC to prepare for bargaining.