

Transgender Day of Remembrance

November 2013

On November 20, workplaces and communities across Canada and around the world will take the time to observe Transgender Day of Remembrance and commemorate those individuals who have lost their lives or faced violence and discrimination due to transphobia.

This serves as a time for our union to recommit to the work required to eliminate and reduce transphobia while building more respectful communities in which we live.

Unifor's National President Jerry Dias reaffirmed this commitment when one of his first official acts was to write a letter to Russian President Putin urging him to repeal recent laws and policies that severely infringe upon the individual and collective rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans citizens.

Dias announced his intention to contact Putin during his keynote speech at the Unifor Founding Convention, stating that Unifor will work to build a better society for all and that this includes not only Canadians but workers around the world.

Trans members of our union still face the reality of transphobia in their daily lives. Trans bashing is still a frequent occurrence. Trans workers and their families continue to experience oppression and discrimination.

Our transgender sisters and brothers have recently experienced yet another legal setback. This includes an eight year long journey of trying to enact federal legislation to bring explicit protections for gender identity and gender expression in the Canadian Human Rights legislation as well as a provision for hate crimes sentencing in the Canadian Criminal Code - if the offence was motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on gender identity.

Unifor is calling on Members of the Senate to support the passage of this legislation – Bill C-279.

Transgender Canadians are members of our union. They are members of our family. They are our neighbors. They are our friends. We are richer because of their participation and contributions in our union and in our communities.

Unifor is proud to stand in solidarity with our trans sisters and brothers.