

## Unifor Statement on International day of Persons with Disabilities

December 3, 2018

Around the world more than a billion people are living with disabilities and far too many of them face economic, political and social exclusion. Barriers to participation in political, social, economic and cultural life are both real and attitudinal. December 3 marks International Day of Persons with Disabilities where Unifor joins a growing movement that is challenging the prevailing and discriminatory views that disempower the disabled community.

The observance of the Day aims to promote an understanding of disability and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

Unions have a unique leadership role to play in building and promoting employment opportunities for all members of equity-seeking groups because of their unparalleled access to workplaces. Trade unions that embrace principles of social movement unionism understand that such inequity disadvantages all.

Unifor recognizes that the negative social and economic costs that results from labour market exclusion impact individuals with disabilities, families and communities. Unifor's creation of equity committees, to address both historical and current exclusion, arose as an expression of the union's commitment to equality and the goal of building a workers' organization that better reflected the community.

The Union supports the work of the Workers' with DisAbilities Committee but the committee is driven by workers who self-identify as members of this equity-seeking group. Together, we can create systemic and lasting change that recognizes the dignity and worth of differently abled persons. Members can begin by taking the following steps towards inclusion:

1. Encourage the use of the [Inclusive Practices Tool Kit](#) in your local union and workplace.
2. On December 3, use Unifor's social media shareable to highlight the abilities of people with disabilities.

3. Challenge your perceptions about disability and consider how your workplace can be made more inclusive.
4. At your next General Membership Meeting play Unifor's Workers with Disabilities video.

*Unifor invites all workers with disabilities to become involved in their locals and union. Please reach out to Niki Lundquist, Workers with Disabilities Staff Liaison at [humanrights@unifor.org](mailto:humanrights@unifor.org) For more information, please visit: [unifor.org/disabilities](http://unifor.org/disabilities)*

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