

Changes to Alberta's employment standards code and labour relations code (Bill 32)

Bill 32, the so-called *Restoring Balance in Alberta's Workplaces Act* was first tabled on July 7 and quickly forced through the legislature into law by July 29. It makes sweeping changes to Alberta's Employment Standards Code and Labour Relations Code. The worst elements of the law are described below.

1

All about Alberta local unions: Bill 32 was an attack on Alberta-based local unions, not the national or international headquarters of unions. Very little of Bill 32 regulates Unifor's national operations out of Toronto. Instead, the new law places many administrative and legal burdens on local unions.

2

Everything is now political: If it doesn't happen at a bargaining table, it is now considered a "political cause", and members must provide individual authorization for union dues being used for this work. Bill 32 thus seeks to limit *any* advocacy, including lobbying government for improved health and safety standards (eg. COVID-19 protocols or drug tests), pay equity, minimum wage, public education, or child care.

3

Harms charities we support: The law now considers charitable work a "political cause." Like the advocacy described above, it can only be undertaken with the explicit authorization of individual members.

4

Curbs picketing power: Picket lines are forbidden from delaying access to job sites, even if you're locked out by the boss. Bill 32 also forbids picket lines from being established at other properties owned by the employer ("secondary picketing").

5

No more overtime: Employers can now average work hours over 52 weeks for overtime calculations (unless explicitly covered in a collective agreement). This is an incredible loss for non-union workers.

What can be done? The government will soon start to write the regulations to implement Bill 32. Please contact your MLA and the premier and ask them to stop the regulations and help your local union. Visit afl.org/defend-worker-rights to take action.