



JERRY DIAS NATIONAL PRESIDENT • PETER KENNEDY NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER • RENAUD GAGNÉ QUEBEC DIRECTOR

Unifor arrives at Parliament Hill to greet newly-elected Government



A strong contingent of Unifor activists and leadership arrives in Ottawa.

More than 70 Unifor activists from across Canada traveled to Ottawa recently to meet with the newly elected Prime Minister, cabinet ministers, Opposition Leaders and MPs, and their senior government advisors. “Unifor will be incredibly active during the life of the 42nd Parliament,” Unifor National President Jerry Dias promised in a news release.

“Defeating the Harper government was good, but we need to keep the new Liberal government focused on improving the lives of all working people in this country.” “Unifor is a social union. Our concerns extend far beyond the shop floor and the bargaining table,” Dias said.

One of the first meetings was with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, attended by Dias, Atlantic Regional Director Lana Payne, BC Regional Director Joie

Warnock and Scott Doherty, Executive Assistant to the National President. In a meeting with NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair, Dias stressed the need to hold the government to account, especially since it had made so many promises during the election about helping ordinary Canadians.

“This is just the start of the conversation,” said Unifor Political Action and Member Mobilization Director Roland Kiehne. “We are going to be very active.”



Unifor regional directors Lana Payne and Katha Fortier greet federal Health Minister Jane Philpott at Unifor reception.

Unifor applauds Ontario's PTSD initiatives

A Unifor press release on February 19 welcomed the introduction of legislation to ensure an initial presumption that post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) diagnosed in first responders is work-related, to avoid lengthy challenges and difficult obstacles in obtaining workplace compensation benefits after injury. The government has introduced Bill 163: Supporting Ontario's First Responders Act (Post-traumatic Stress Disorder), 2016 based on an earlier private members bill by Cheri DiNovo NDP MPP last week. The Bill 163 announcement was the second and more critical element of a strategy to deal with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) for emergency first responder workers. Unifor is calling for all-party support and prompt passage in the provincial Legislature.

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Unifor launches ambitious Stronger Public Health Care Now campaign

Unifor is determined to strongly defend our public health care system – providing high-quality care for every Canadian, regardless of their income level or where they live. A stronger role for the federal government through a new Health Accord is critical to ensuring health care workers are recognized for their compassion and care.

Over the past decade the federal government under Stephen Harper distanced itself from meaningful negotiations with the provinces and territories around health care funding and care standards. Harper had allowed the 2004 Health Accord to expire in 2014 intending over \$36 billion in funding cuts to begin in 2017.



This is why we must act now. What can you do?

- ♥ Sign our petition to the federal minister of health, Jane Philpott, demanding our new federal government make health care a priority. To order petition postcards for your workplace; your community or your family, contact your Local or the National Union at corey.vermey@unifor.org or at 1-800-268-5763.
- ♥ Stay tuned for updates and event notices on the Unifor campaign page at <http://www.unifor.org/en/take-action/campaigns/we-need-a-new-health-accord> and on Unifor's social media channels – Facebook, Twitter
- ♥ Contact your Member of Parliament and tell them why you think federal funding must be restored and our public health care system protected.

Thundering call for minimum standards from Local 229

On January 11, 2016 Unifor Local 229 held a rally outside MPP Michael Gravelle's office on the issue of "minimum standard of hands on care" in LTC facilities in Ontario. They were supported by other sister Unifor Locals as well as the Thunder Bay Health Coalition, other Unions and concerned citizens. Suzanne Pulice Vice President Unifor Local 229 stated "The PC government removed minimum standards in LTC in the mid-nineties and we have been fighting this issue ever since. The staffing levels are getting worse, the new Hogarth Riverview expansion has gone from one PSW to 8 residents to 10 or 11 residents. We need the provincial government to legislate minimum standards of 4 hrs of hands on care per resident per day."



Demanding a minimum standard



Local 229 Suzanne Pulice speaks to rally

Sault paramedics receive interest award



Paramedics represented by Unifor Local 1359 in Sault Ste. Marie received an interest arbitration award from a board of arbitration chaired by William Kaplan on February 5, 2016. The award provided paramedics with the Emergency Medical Services

Division of the Fire Services Department a renewal contract from April 1, 2014 until March 31, 2017 and annual wage increases of 2.25% on April 1, 2014 and annual increases of 1.8% in 2015 and 1.75% in 2016. The award also provided a pregnancy/parental SUB plan at 80% for the EI waiting period and next 15 weeks of leave and vacation improvements for senior paramedics.

Unifor presents Bill 132 submission

Unifor submission on Bill 132 raised the critical issues of a lack of attention to mental injuries that result from workplace violence; the lack of requirement for substantive effective policies, and the lack of an explicit requirement to prevent workplace harassment.

http://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/brief-statements/bill_132.pdf

Putting the Heart back in Health Care

Unifor joined forces at January 20, 2016 federal-provincial health ministers meeting in Vancouver with health care advocates and activists from across Canada. The January health ministers' summit in Vancouver was no ordinary meeting - but the first such meeting since 2009.



"The Ministers gathered here this week must understand that Canadians can see what lies ahead," said Gavin McGarrigle, Unifor's BC Area Director. "We have an aging population, escalating drug prices, a stealthy increase in private 'fee-for-service' medicine and we also remain the only developed country with universal health care but no national Pharmacare program for prescription medication. Now is the time to work together for meaningful solutions."

Unifor National President Jerry Dias urged Canada's Health Ministers to come to a meaningful agreement on health care funding as they met in Vancouver. He emphasized this as a critical moment to rebuild confidence and capacity of our neglected public health system.

"Canadians spoke loud and clear in our 2015 election that health care remains our top shared priority," said Dias. "Harper systematically dismantled collaboration between levels of government, and as a result put at risk the entire system of health care that we hold so dear. We expect and demand a strong collaborative effort by all levels of government now to properly fund reform and progress."

The Harper government allowed the Canadian Health Accord to expire with no plans or agreement to renew. This would mean a \$36 billion cut in federal transfers over the next 10 years, leaving provincial governments with the increased financial burden made worse by the growing demands of an aging population.

Unifor Health Accord campaign builds momentum



Local 1359 prepares for campaign



Local 302 all set for campaign



Local 707 retirees ready for campaign



Local 1106 grabs hold of campaign



Local 27 prepares for campaign



Local 222 retirees give campaign a lift

Stop the 'blood money' clinics

Unifor issued a press release last week calling on Canadians to petition the Government of Canada to refuse to issue or approve any license to Canadian Plasma Resources or other private, for-profit, donor-paid blood products company to operate in Canada; and implement legislation that ensures such clinics are not allowed to operate in Canada. The release is posted at: <http://www.unifor.org/en/whats-new/press-room/profit-plasma-clinic-goes-against-report-patient-safety>

An electronic version of the petition to the House of Commons sponsored by NDP MP Don Davies, Vancouver Kingsway is available at: <https://petitions.parl.gc.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-126>.

Closing the gender wage gap as IWD approaches



There is an unacceptable gender wage gap in Ontario when on average women earn 31.5% less than men; or only 68.5¢ to every dollar earned by men. The gap is even larger in the 'care' economy - health care workers remain tremendously underpaid as hard-working and dedicated care providers when considering workload as well as compensation.

The Equal Pay Coalition's website at <http://www.equalpaycoalition.org/> compares a practical nurse (RPN) with a cable technician with a 33% gap in earnings - but how is compassion or caring and effort measured much less rewarded?

In the care economy, there is a highly gendered aspect to the nature and form of work where care providers are seldom truly recognized and appreciated for their effort and compassion. Workload/understaffing issues and the depreciation of direct care takes an extra toll on members who often work through

lunches and breaks; arrive early and stay late without pay simply because residents need care.

As IWD approaches find out more about the gender wage gap consultation here: <http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/about/gwg/>. Check out our Unifor policy on gender equality here: http://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/attachments/unifor_policy_paper_-_english_-_genderequality.pdf

Take action to pressure government to close the gender wage gap as promised:

- Give them a piece of your mind by filing out their survey here: <http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/about/gwg/consultation.php>
- Participate with Unifor in International Women's Day activities on March 8 in your community. Check our website at <http://www.unifor.org/women> for locations and events.
- On April 19, mark Equal Pay Day by wearing red and taking part in events at your workplace or local. More ideas are in the action kit on the Equal Pay Coalition website at <http://www.equalpaycoalition.org>.

Send in pictures to women@unifor.org to share stories on social media. Our activism is our strength.

Unifor speaks at CCPA 'Promising Practices' book launch

Unifor was invited as a panelist at the book release of "Promising Practices in Long-Term Care: Ideas Worth Sharing". This Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) book reports on the findings of an international team of researchers touring six countries in a search for promising practices in long term residential care for the elderly. With concrete examples of promising ways that long term care might be organized and undertaken



Promising Practices
in Long Term Care
Ideas Worth Sharing

Co-edited by Donna Bates and Pat Armstrong

respecting the needs of residents, families, workers and managers, the book provides ideas on how we might re-imagine long term care. Corey Vermeij, Director of Healthcare spoke at the launch of the need to recognize the limits of relying on for-profit corporations driven to increase profit to provide care for our frail elderly in long term care. One of the authors, Professor Pat Armstrong will be a guest speaker at the 2016 Unifor Health Care Conference in May in Port Elgin.

Seasons Retirement members ratify first contract

The 46 new members of Unifor Local 302 working at Seasons Retirement Communities in Strathroy voted overwhelmingly to ratify their first collective agreement. Congratulations to committee members Mary Longdo, Sharon Kroesbergen and Mona Saunders as well as National Rep Jim Pound and NEB member and Local 302 representative Nancy McMurphy. Members voted last October to join Unifor.

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