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# uniFORUM



## Labour law changes defeated

Unifor is pleased with the decision of New Brunswick Premier Brian Gallant's government to shelve its proposed changes to labour legislation.

"We are glad to see that the premier heard and acted upon our very serious concerns with Bill 24," said Unifor National President Jerry Dias

Dias and Unifor's Atlantic Regional Director Lana Payne met with the Premier and Labour Minister Francine Landry to outline problems with the legislation.

"Bill 24 would have resulted in unnecessary labour conflict across both the public and private sectors, eviscerated free and fair collective bargaining, put a downward pressure on the wages of all New Brunswickers and made it very difficult to achieve negotiated agreements," said Payne.

Unifor Atlantic Regional Director Lana Payne, left, led a delegation of New Brunswick activists to the Legislature to speak out against labour law changes in the province.

## Unifor active at NDP convention

At the beginning of April, Edmonton was buzzing with more than 1,700 delegates attending the NDP Convention.

Although it was a policy convention, the issue on everyone's mind post federal election was the future direction of the NDP. Fifty-two percent

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## Alberta budget applauded while NL disappoints

Canada's largest union in the energy sector says that the NDP government has found the right balance between maintaining core social services and investing in infrastructure that will help Alberta grow.

"The most important thing is to make sure that government programs are there when Albertans need them," said Jerry Dias,

Unifor's National President. "We commend the Premier and her government for showing the strength to do the right thing and protect Albertans."

In Newfoundland and Labrador, however, the Liberal government of Dwight Ball brought in a disappointing budget that will only hurt working people, Dias said.

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## Anti-harass statement

Creating and preserving a safe, harassment-free environment is our collective responsibility.

All locals, members and retirees are encouraged to read out the Unifor anti-harassment statement at the beginning of each meeting, union event or conference.

The full statement is available at [Unifor.org](http://Unifor.org).

## Day of Mourning

On April 28, labour groups across Canada will mark the National Day of Mourning, stopping to remember those lost to workplace injury or illness, and to honour the seven Unifor brothers who have died in the past year.

Check with your local labour council for information on ceremonies in your area, and go to [Unifor.org](http://Unifor.org) to see Unifor's statement.



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Reach us at:

### Uniforum

Unifor Communications  
205 Placer Court, Fifth Floor  
Toronto, Ontario, M5H 3H9

1-800-268-5763

[communications@unifor.org](mailto:communications@unifor.org)

[www.unifor.org](http://www.unifor.org)

## Media sector pushes political action



Delegates to Media Council showed their support for striking workers at the Halifax Chronicle Herald, with several locals also donating money.

Faced with a challenging future putting local news coverage in danger across the country, delegates to Unifor's recent Media Council meeting vowed to boost their sector's political activity and lobbying efforts, including setting up a political action fund.

"This group is committed

to fight for its industry," Media Sector Director Howard Law said.

The council's broadcast sector voted to set up the Media Workers Political Action Fund, made up of contributions from each local representing broadcast workers across Canada. The fund will be used to pay for

lobbying efforts, polling and other efforts.

The 120 delegates also took part in workshops on lobbying and social media campaigning.

"Unifor is involved in politics because it needs to be to protect worker rights," said Unifor National President Jerry Dias.

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of delegates made a democratic choice that triggered a leadership race to occur within two years.

Unifor thanked Tom Mulcair for his work to expose the Harper government and advancing progressive politics during the last election.

The convention was a reminder that constructive debate and open dialogue are healthy and that our union must be front and center in politics to ensure workers' needs are represented.

A key focus of policy debate was climate change. An amended resolution requires meaningful consultation and dialogue before the party adopts climate change policy



Unifor National President Jerry Dias led a strong caucus of Unifor activists to the NDP national convention in Edmonton recently.

or an action plan. Unifor supported this resolution to further discussions at a local level across Canada for the next two years.

"Our union will not allow others to dominate the discussion on climate change policy," Unifor National President Jerry Dias said.

Unifor will push politicians and employers to be pragmatic rather than

ideological, and will work to ensure that Canada's natural resources are developed sustainably for the benefit of all Canadians and the climate.

"By working together we can build a sustainable future with good jobs," Dias said. "This is our time to lead. Members are encouraged to participate in the cross country dialogue."

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"We look forward to working with government on the announced consultation process for labour laws."

Dias and Payne thanked the many Unifor local

leaders and activists who pushed back against the proposed changes to New Brunswick's labour laws. Unifor members gathered at the Legislature with members of other unions on different occasions over the past two weeks to voice

their opposition to the bill.

Unifor also presented the Premier's office with a review of the legislation by Unifor's legal team which noted that Bill 24 amounted to a substantial interference with collective bargaining. This would violate section

2(d) of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"Our strong opposition to this legislation was not just to protect the rights of our members, but to protect the rights of all workers in the province," said Payne.



Unifor leadership shows its support for Red Shirt Day, to protest the gender pay gap. Pictures are Ontario Regional Director Katha Fortier, National Secretary-Treasurer Peter Kennedy, Atlantic Regional Director Lana Payne and Western Regional Director Jopie Warnock.

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"In difficult times, the government of Newfoundland and Labrador is only making the lives of working people more difficult," Dias said.

Unifor said that Premier Rachel Notley kept her promise to stop the extreme cuts introduced under Jim Prentice. The Alberta NDP's second budget rejects austerity and aims to boost job creation with targeted investments in a variety of capital spending projects.

"Our communities depend on excellent schools, hospitals, and other public services. It makes perfect sense to shield those programs when thousands of Albertans are dealing with unemployment and retraining," said Joie

Warnock, Unifor's Western Director. "Rachel Notley has shown real leadership by finding ways to protect the most vulnerable in this budget."

The budget pledges to support 380,000 children with the Alberta Child Benefit and the Enhanced Alberta Family Employment Tax Credit. Training in the province received a \$25 million boost.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, gas and sales taxes are going up, while a deficit levy will hurt low income families hardest.

As well, there will be courthouses closed and cuts to healthcare programs. Ten infrastructure programs will be either cancelled or postponed.

"One province rejected austerity, and the other embraced it," Dias said.

## Baker wins Callwood Award

On April 14, 11 individuals and eight groups received recognition from the Ontario Honours and Awards Secretariat for their outstanding work in the community with June Callwood Outstanding Achievement Awards.

Among the 2016 winners was Unifor sister and retiree, Roxie Baker. The Unifor Port Elgin childcare center is named after Baker, and she has a long history of activism in the union.

Baker is a pioneer for women in the labour movement. She was President of Local 1325 and led the bargaining team to make significant breakthroughs for women and subsidized child care for workers at Canadian

Fabricated Products in Stratford, Ontario.

She also bargained language on sexual harassment, equal pay and adoption leave benefits well before such language was the norm in Unifor agreements.

Baker was the first sister from the former Canadian Auto Workers on the NEB.

Her activism continues in our union through her active involvement in the community and in a Unifor retiree chapter.





## Auto industry forum to examine the industry on eve of bargaining

As Unifor heads into its first round of Detroit Three auto talks since its founding, a key forum involving business, labour and academia will be held in Windsor next month looking at the state of the industry in Canada.

"It has been a long time coming that we get together in the fashion that we are on May 11," said Local 444 President Dino Chiodo, the driving force behind getting the forum off the ground.

"The Policy and Solutions Forum brings together three driving forces in our region with academia, labour and the Chamber of Commerce. Together we all

want to find a real solution to the growing issue of trade imbalance and how it affects manufacturing in this country."

Chiodo said it is vital that labour and business show it can work together on matters of mutual interest. The May 11 forum grew out of Local 444's Solidarity Conference in 2013 that saw more than 400 labour leaders meet in Windsor, along with members of the Chamber of Commerce.

The Forum is a first for the region, with each group involved having an equal say in how the event is organized. Cooperation

**IN THIS ISSUE** Unifor joined with the rest of the New Brunswick labour movement to defeat labour law changes. The union was active at the NDP convention. A good budget in Alberta, not good in Newfoundland and Labrador. Media gets political. Roxie Baker wins an award for her activism.



**Unifor Local 444 President Dino Chiodo, left, at a press conference to announce the Policy and Solutions Forum recently, with Patti France, President St. Clair College, Matt Marchand, President and CEO Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce and Allan Conway, Dean of the University of Windsor Odette School of Business.**

at that level can only help future relations between organized labour, the chamber of commerce and the academic world in the future, Chiodo said.

The forum takes place at the Caboto Club in Windsor. Unifor National President Jerry Dias, Canadian Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Perrin Beatty, Ontario

and federal auto czar Ray Tanguay and Ontario Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure Brad Duguid and others will be keynote speakers. St. Clair College Vice-President of Academics Waseem Habash will also be there.

Sessions will focus on the state of the industry, trends and solutions.