

## **Unifor urges Ontario Government to make meaningful increase to minimum wage**

January 28, 2014

(Toronto) Unifor is urging the Ontario Liberal government to make an immediate and meaningful increase to the minimum wage, to lift hundreds of thousands of working Ontarians out of poverty. The Ontario government has pledged to announce an increase later this week, after the Minimum Wage Advisory Panel released its recommendations yesterday.

Unifor National President Jerry Dias expressed his disappointment with the panel's very modest recommendations and said that the \$11 an hour currently being floated falls far short of what's needed in the province. The union has supported the call to raise the minimum wage to \$14 an hour.

"It's not just about keeping pace with inflation, the minimum wage in Ontario is not even close to a living wage, even in 2010 at the time of the last increase," said Dias. "The current minimum wage at \$10.25 means that anyone working full-time at this rate is approximately 19 per cent below the poverty line. This situation is intolerable and inhumane."

Dias said that a hike retroactive to 2010 is a good start, but that workers need a wage that doesn't force them to work 2-3 jobs at a time. He also said that experience has shown fear-mongering by business about an increase being unaffordable and causing job loss has been utterly unfounded.

Unifor is the largest union in the private sector, representing more than 300,000 workers in 20 different sectors. Unifor was formed last Labour Day weekend by the coming together of the Canadian Auto Workers union and the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers union.

-30-

*For more information, please contact Unifor Communications Director Shannon Devine 416-302-1699 or Unifor Communications representative Katie Arnup 416-333-8097*

*To read Unifor's submission to the Minimum Wage Advisory Panel, please visit:*

[http://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/attachments/submission\\_to\\_ontarios\\_minimum\\_wage\\_review\\_panel.pdf](http://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/attachments/submission_to_ontarios_minimum_wage_review_panel.pdf)