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uniforum



Nova Scotia health care workers, including members of Unifor, rallied recently outside the provincial legislature to protest merger legislation.

Arbitrator appointed in NS health merger

Unifor is pleased with the appointment of James Dorsey Q.C. as the mediator/ arbitrator to resolve the difficulties resulting from the implementation of Nova Scotia's Bill 1 and its impact on health care workers, their

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Stop bandit taxis

Unifor National President Jerry Dias has written to the Ontario Minister of Transportation demanding immediate action to curb the spread of bandit taxi operation in the province, including those dressed as mobile apps such as Uber.

"There is a place for Uber in Ontario, there's no doubt. But they should have to operate within the same

licensing framework and with the same public health and safety rules as do other operators," Dias said in his October 8th letter to Minister Steven Del Duca.

Unifor represents nearly 2,500 people working in the Ontario taxi industry.

Mobile apps such as Uber bill themselves as a rideshare services, connecting those needing a ride with independent drivers for hire. Such drivers aren't required to hold licenses, may operate vehicles not equipped with

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Transit locals bargain with referendum in mind

Unifor Locals 111 and 2200 in Vancouver ratified a one-year contract extension on October 8 that included a 1.75% pay bump.

Unifor, representing Translink's Transit

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#unifor

Here's a selection of tweets about @UniforTheUnion

@ConradCollaco Striking @UniforTheUnion workers reach deal with @navistar cbc.sh/i3tJEYa #HamOnt pic.twitter.com/2qoMN1XoF7

@pressprogress 7 sensible reasons why #childcare is good for the economy AND women pressprogress.ca/en/post/7-perf... #cdnpoli #canlab

BC printer outsourcing means higher risk

The decision to hand over government printing contracts to for-profit businesses could jeopardize privacy and end up costing more, according to Unifor.

“When it comes to this government, ideology trumps common sense every time,” said Alex Charles, President of Unifor Local 780G, which represents workers at the printer.

“If they actually took the time to look at the numbers, they would realize that the Queen’s Printer is a valuable and cost-effective service to the entire government.”

The BC government recently announced that it will be closing its internal printing service in favour of using higher-priced private sector printers.

The Queen’s Printer service of government has been printing sensitive government documents for 155 years. Many government departments rely on the Queen’s Printer as a low-cost alternative.

“There was a reason that the Queen’s Printer has been around 155 years—the government needs a source of cost-effective and confidential printing,” said Joie Warnock, Western Director of Unifor. 

Photo spotlight

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PHOTO BY GERRY GOODISON

Unifor Local 584 Retirees collected 450 kg of food for the Knights Table in Brampton, Ontario. Doug Berry (Retirees Secretary), Chris Wilski (Retirees Chair) and Frank Marek (Retirees Vice-Chair) deliver the food.



MDA management team recently presented Unifor with a piece of Aerospace history - the Canadarm - which will find a home at the Unifor Education Centre in Port Elgin, Ontario. The Canadarm originated from SPAR Aerospace

Sign emergency response petition

Emergency Response Workers - paramedics, police officers and firefighters - confront traumatic events on a near daily basis in order to

provide safety and well-being to the public. Many of these workers suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a direct result of this work.

Currently, the provisions in the *Workplace Safety Insurance Act* are often barriers to claims resulting from this issue. As a result many individuals suffer repeatedly from the effects of PTSD through the

protracted appeal process which has been destructive to their personal and family health.

These workers provide life-saving response and medical care in our times of emergency need and should receive the care they need in theirs.

To print and sign the petition, and to share it with others, visit www.unifor.org 

Navistar deal addressing two-tier wages is ratified

Workers at a Navistar Canada Inc. have ratified an agreement that significantly addresses an unfair wage structure at their workplace.

Members of Unifor Local 504, on strike since September 29, accepted an agreement October 16 that avoided the establishment of a third tier of wages, and considerably closed the gap between the existing two

tiers.

Navistar is a parts distribution centre in Hannon, Ontario with approximately 30 unionized employees.

“This is a good agreement that means young and older workers alike will be paid more fairly,” said Dave Reston, President of Local 504. “Our members stood up for their rights, and the

rights of the next generation of workers.”

Navistar Canada Inc., formerly International Truck and Engine Corporation, is the distribution facility that serve as the parts distribution centre for eastern Canada to support International and IC Bus vehicles, MaxxForce diesel engines and all makes of commercial trucks. 

UNIFOR COMMUNICATIONS: SARAH BLACKSTOCK, SHANNON DEVINE, KATIE ARNUP, STUART LAIDLAW, IAN BOYKO, SHELLEY BURGOYNE, MARIE-ANDREE L'HEUREUX AND ANNE MARIE VINCENT

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safety devices, and often bypass normal insurance requirements, among other things.

"The fact that Uber thinks it can unilaterally exempt itself from industry rules and regulations, largely designed to protect the public, simply by calling itself a technology company is, quite frankly, absurd," Dias wrote to Del Duca.

Unifor generally supports the use of mobile technologies to enhance taxi services for customers, "while adhering to existing rules and regulations for the safe and lawful operation of a cab," wrote Dias.

Unifor is calling for legislation to get the cabs off the street and for a meeting of stakeholders. 

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Operators, Maintenance, and SeaBus workers, approached the employer about the extension so bargaining doesn't become a distraction during the impending 2015 transit funding referendum.

"It makes a lot of sense for everyone to focus on fixing our transit system needs and voting 'yes' in the referendum," said Nathan Woods, President of Unifor Local 111.

"Given the importance of the referendum, we think this is the best result at this time," said Joe Elworthy, Co-Chair of the Unifor Bargaining Committee.

Locals 111 and 2200 represent more than 4,700 transit workers in the Lower Mainland. 



Members of Unifor Locals 111 and 2200 arrive to ratify a contract extension.

Did you know?

In the 2013 election, BC Premier Christy Clark promised a referendum on the future of transit funding for Vancouver and BC's Lower Mainland. Unifor's Vancouver transit locals are gearing up to be part of that campaign.

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union representation and their collective agreements.

Dorsey was recommended by all four health care unions - Unifor, CUPE, NSNU and NSGEU - and accepted by the Health Authorities of Nova Scotia (HANS).

"It was essential that we have an arbitrator with the kind of experience that Mr. Dorsey brings to the table," said Lana Payne, Unifor Atlantic Regional Director, who noted that Dorsey has extensive background dealing with matters of health care restructuring including in both British Columbia and Saskatchewan.

"The fact that we were

able to reach a swift agreement with the employer over the selection of an arbitrator is proof that the unions and the health authority can work together, even though we take the position and will continue to take the position that Bill 1 is unconstitutional and a violation of our members' Charter rights," said Payne.

Among other things, Bill 1 would reduce the number of bargaining units in the Nova Scotia health sector from 50 to four. If mediation does not resolve the issue, Dorsey will have the power to impose a settlement on which unions represents workers. Dorsey has been an arbitrator for 37 years and was appointed to handle the health authorities' merger in B.C. 

Bell Aliant workers reach deal

Unifor members at Bell Aliant have reached a new tentative three-year agreement with the employer ahead of the completion of the acquisition by Bell Canada Enterprises Inc. on October 31.

"We continued with a bargaining process that had begun before the announcement of the BCE buyout and feel that this agreement is in the best interests of Bell Aliant workers," said Rick Rose, National Representative at Unifor.

Results of ratification

votes will be known by Thursday, October 30.

If ratified, the new agreement will take effect on January 1, 2015, a day after their current three-year deal expires.

Details of the deal will be released once it has been ratified.

Unifor represents nearly 3,000 workers at Bell Aliant across the four Atlantic Provinces with approximately 1,050 members in Nova Scotia, 675 in Newfoundland and Labrador, 875 in New Brunswick and 185 in Prince Edward Island.

There will be a limited retirement offer made by the company coincidental with and conditional on successful ratification of this tentative agreement. 

Shine a light to stop violence against women

From Julie White, Unifor Women's Dept Director

"I swear never to commit, excuse or remain silent about violence against women. This is my oath." Delegates to Unifor's 2014 Canadian Council

On December 6, 1989, 14 engineering students at L'École Polytechnique were singled out and murdered, solely because of their gender. Now known as the National

Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, this year will mark the 25th anniversary of that horrific day, and although much has changed, violence against women still permeates our society.

In the lead up to December 6, 2014, Unifor will remember those murdered as a result of gender-based violence, reflect on those who still experience the daily reality of violence, and recommit

to taking action.

Unifor locals are encouraged to support two similar campaigns: Shine the Light on Woman Abuse and Light the Night Against Violence. Both call for the lighting of buildings and communities across Canada to raise awareness around gender-based violence.

"Shine the Light on Woman Abuse" (lawc.on.ca/shinethelight/) calls on communities to be lit up in purple for the month

of November. Similarly, on December 6, 2014, the YWCA initiative "Light the Night Against Violence" (rosecampaign.ca) calls for communities to be lit up in red. In support of both, Unifor offices will be lit in purple from December 1-6.

Whether you choose red or purple (or both), the goal is the same - any light against violence will help to raise awareness around gender based violence and is encouraged. 

Young workers hold first conference

Unifor young workers gathered for their first conference from October 1st to 3rd. Most of the 120 participants in attendance also took part in the Good Jobs Summit the following weekend.

The successful conference took place at the Ryerson Student Centre, a student union-owned and operated building in the heart of Toronto.

During the conference, young Unifor members heard from National

President Jerry Dias, who encouraged them to play an active role in their local unions.

Participants also heard from Unifor staff and activists on issues of retirement security, social media and union structure. They also discussed ways to build local young worker committees.

On the last day of the conference, participants took part in two hands-on workshops. The first one was to give them a greater



Delegates gathered recently in Toronto for the first Unifor Youth Conference.

understanding of current issues that affect young workers, namely: income inequality, child care, climate change, tuition fees and minimum wage.

The second aimed to help them understand what role they can play in the mobilizing for those issues, including the upcoming federal election. 

Unifor will stand for media workers

Unifor, which represents workers across Canada at both companies, will be closely monitoring the planned purchase of Sun Media by Postmedia as the process unfolds in the coming months.

"This is a very difficult time for our members, and Unifor will be there for them to protect their rights and their ability to do their jobs effectively, as

well as the future viability of this important industry," said Unifor Media Director Howard Law.

Media Council Chair Randy Kitt said the media industry in Canada, including print, broadcast and digital, is vital to ensuring a well-informed public.

"Unifor will work to ensure Canadians have a diversity of media voices available to them," Kitt said.

"We will keep a close eye on the Competition Bureau process and hold Postmedia President Paul Godfrey to his promise to operate Sun Media major market dailies side by side with existing Postmedia properties," said Paul Morse, president of Unifor Local 87-M, which represents workers at several Sun Media papers.

In Vancouver, where Unifor Local 2000-M

represents workers at the Postmedia's Sun and the Province, there was concern.

"It is a sad day when scores of Canadian newspapers fall into the hands of U.S.-based hedge funds," said Local 2000 Vice-President Gary Engler. "Local 2000 will do what it can to protect our members' interests and to defend Canadian journalism." 