

Volume 9 // ISSUE 1

**ONTARIO FEDERATION  
OF LABOUR  
ACTION  
REPORT**

**WINTER 2019**

**SPECIAL FEATURE:**

Fighting Bill 47

**PAGES 3-8**

**EQUITY:**

New info sheets on  
allyship for Trans\* Day of  
Remembrance

**PAGE 7-10**

**SOLIDARITY:**

Standing with education  
workers and students  
against reckless cuts to  
education.

**PAGE 9**



**// Support the rights  
of women and  
marginalized people.  
Text WOMEN to  
647-496-5602.**

## // OFL OFFICERS



**CHRIS BUCKLEY**  
President



**PATTY COATES**  
Secretary-Treasurer



**AHMAD GAIED**  
Executive  
Vice-President

The Ontario Federation of Labour represents 54 unions and one million workers. It is Canada's largest provincial labour federation.

Volume 9, ISSUE 1 of the **OFL ACTION REPORT** was produced for the FEBRUARY 2019 meeting of the Executive Board of the Ontario Federation of Labour.

**ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR (OFL) – FÉDÉRATION DU TRAVAIL DE L'ONTARIO (FTO)**

15 Gervais Drive, Suite 202  
Toronto, Ontario M3C 1Y8

**416-441-2731 // 1-800-668-9138**

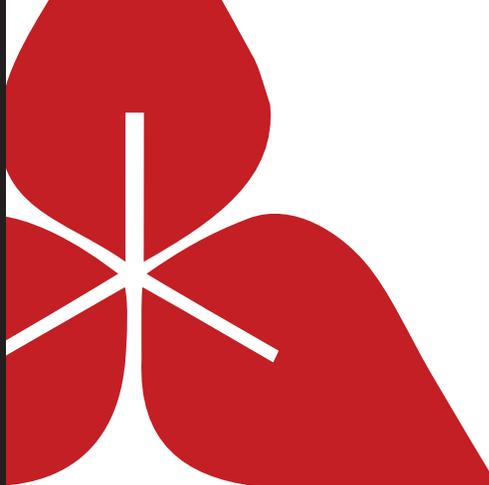
**TDD: 416-443-6305**

**FAX: 416-441-1893**

[info@ofl.ca](mailto:info@ofl.ca)

This document was proudly produced with unionized labour cope343

Writing/layout: OFL Communications



**Winter 2019**

Volume 9 // ISSUE 1

# ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR **ACTION REPORT**

// SUBSCRIBE TO THE OFL E-NEWSLETTER BY TEXTING THE WORD "OFL" TO 647-496-5602

### OFL NEWS

- 02 // Letter from the President
- 03-08 // Ontario loud: Actions against Bill 47
- 10 // New OFL board members
- 10 // OHC/OFL pre-budget submission rallies
- 14 // Pearl Sawyer: Looking back on more than 30 years of activism
- 19 // Remembering Bill Steep
- 19 // OFL and education workers rally for decent work at PC convention
- 20 // OFL defends decent work and public services
- 21 // Op-ed on social assistance rates and decent work

### EQUITY

- 08 // Trans\* Day of Remembrance: Ally is a verb
- 12 // Together we rise: Standing against hate
- 15 // Women's March shows the Power of Many
- 17 // December 6 statement: Act to end violence against women at work, in law, and in policy
- 17 // Be part of the Power of Many: March 8 project
- 22 // Women's March resources from OFL
- 22 // Women's March Twitter diary
- 23-24 // African Liberation and Black History Month launch of Generations of Justice series
- 24 // OFL to Ford government: Take Immediate Action to End Street Checks

### HEALTH & SAFETY

- 11-12 // Spotlight on Prevention Link
- 25 // Pressing for criminal investigation into new Fiera Foods worker death

### SOLIDARITY

- 09 // Resisting Ford's reckless post-secondary education scheme
- 10 // Fighting for public education
- 13 // OFL condemns use of back-to-work legislation in CUPW strike
- 18 // Labour movement stands with Oshawa GM workers
- 25 // OFL protest back-to-work legislation for power workers

## // WELCOME TO OUR NEW AFFILIATES:

CUPE Local 2 (500 members)

Thank you for joining the Federation! We look forward to working together to win decent work for all Ontarians.

## FRIENDS,

People first is the message that the labour movement of Ontario is sending to the government. In all corners of the province, we continue to build the resistance against Ford's attacks on workers, vulnerable Ontarians, our public services and the standards that we expect for workplace rights and a living wage in Ontario.

On October 15, the OFL held a day of action against Bill 47, the government's labour and employment legislation, which eroded workers' rights and cancelled the scheduled increase to a \$15 minimum wage, stalling the minimum wage in Ontario at \$14 an hour. Over 50 coordinated actions were held across Ontario in protest, with workers sharing their stories about how changing workplace laws would negatively affect them. The government failed to listen to the widespread concern and voice of the people, but thanks to our work - their popularity dropped significantly. We will keep working to ensure that this anti-worker government does not win in the next provincial election and to safeguard workers and equity rights until then.

There is a long road ahead. The OFL is taking immediate action to fightback in the short-term and build a strategy for the long run, building resistance to cuts and policy changes that hurt the people of Ontario. In the coming months we will be active across the province in regional activation meetings and will host a province-wide political action conference on March 25, 2019. This government is not subtle in its actions – from cutting OSAP and student loan repayment grace periods, to musing about the privatization of our public health care system, the government shows that it values big business over people in this province.

We made our position clear in the recommendations we put forward in the OFL's January pre-budget submission, where we told the government that a pro-business agenda does not change the facts in Ontario: women face a 30 per cent pay gap, racialized workers face discrimination in the workplace, students are graduating with mountains of debt, unable to find decent work that will support them, public health care needs to be properly funded across this province, and investment in public education is lagging, leaving our schools in disrepair, and educators struggling to provide quality and relevant curriculum to their students.

The Ontario budget is coming up, and the OFL collaborated with the Ontario Health Coalition for a series of rallies at each of the pre-budget hearings. The rallies called on the government to halt its plans of the privatization of health care and rebuild through needed investment in universally accessible, public health care.

The OFL played a key role in the global women's march, providing marshals and hosting the Queen's Park rally



during the Toronto event. The Power of Many was on display as thousands of women and labour activists demanded equality during a rally at Nathan Phillips square and a march to Queen's Park. Labour Councils across Ontario organized marches in 18 cities. The OFL launched a petition against Bill 66 which takes away rights from women and marginalized people. The message was clear: "We are not going back."

February is African Liberation and Black History Month, and the OFL and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists are launching a new series called *Legacies of Labour and Community Activism: Generations of Justice*, featuring the accomplishments of African Canadian activists. The inaugural series and video content accompanies a statement calling for an end to the discriminatory practice of carding and an end to racist pay practices.

The labour movement can and will come together to stop this government from dismantling our public services, further eroding labour rights, and failing to act to end racist and discriminatory policies.

We are the power of many, and we will win.

In Solidarity,

Chris Buckley

President

Ontario Federation of Labour



// FOLLOW AND RETWEET OFL AT:

@OFLabour and @ChrisBuckleyOFL

# ONTARIO LOUD: OCTOBER 15 DAY OF ACTION AGAINST BILL 47

More than 50 actions were held on Monday October 15 to defend workers' rights in Ontario.



A rally at the Ministry of Labour, one of more than 50 rallies held across Ontario on October 15, 2018

From labour councils rallying at MPP offices to activists collecting petition signatures, to information pickets, Ontarians rallied on October 15. They were responding to the introduction of Bill 47, which would remove basic workplace rights such as two paid sick days, equal pay for equal work, laws that make it easier to join and keep a union, and the increase to a \$15 minimum wage.

The day of action was coordinated by the Ontario Federation of Labour, Fight for \$15 and Fairness along with community, student, teacher, faculty, faith, health, labour and non-profit associations across the province.

The action targeted ridings of Conservative MPPs.

"It is not too late for Premier Doug Ford and his cabinet to do the right thing and help Ontario workers," said Ontario Federation of Labour President Chris Buckley. "This October 15, wherever Conservative MPPs looked across the province, they found workers who were demanding decent work laws and a \$15 minimum wage."



Rallying for decent work in Parkdale, Toronto.



OFL Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates speaking at a rally for decent work in Innisfil, Ontario.

“Every single day we encounter people who tell us they voted for Premier Ford because they thought his promise to be ‘for the people’ meant standing up to corporate elites, like Galen Weston and Rocco Rossi,” said Pam Frache, Coordinator of the Fight for \$15 & Fairness campaign.

Rocco Rossi, the Chief Executive Officer of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, repeatedly called for a full repeal of Bill 148, the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act*.

Actions across the province ranged from public rallies, visits to the offices of Conservative MPPs, workplace actions in support of decent work laws and a \$15 minimum wage, campus actions at universities and colleges as well as neighbourhood outreach blitzes.



OFL Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates rallying at the Ministry of Labour.



OFL President Chris Buckley speaks outside the Ministry of Labour on why Bill 47 must be withdrawn.



Justice for Janitors activists defending the \$15/hr minimum wage.



"Don't hurt people and our economy," a clear message against Bill 47.



Rallying at the University of Toronto.

# DOUG FORD BREAKS HIS PROMISE TO THE PEOPLE WITH BILL 47

Doug Ford brought forward Bill 47 on October 23, the Bill that would rob Ontarians of basic workplace rights.

Labour and community were quick to respond to the introduction of the Bill, holding a press conference about how Bill 47 would affect workers across Ontario.

From taking away paid sick days to ending provisions on equal pay for part-time and full-time employees and cancelling laws that make it easier to join and keep a union, Bill 47 would hurt workers across the province.

The press conference was part of a campaign from the OFL and its community partners, the Fight for \$15 and Fairness to protect the hard-won rights of Ontarians, in particular the 1.7 million low-wage employees,

women workers, racialized workers, Indigenous workers and workers with a disability who will be disproportionately affected by losing these basic workplace rights.

Speakers at the press conference included President of the Ontario Federation of Labour Chris Buckley, Fight for \$15 and Fairness coordinator Pam Frache, emergency physician Jesse McLaren, small business owner and coordinator of the Better Way Alliance Gilleen Pearce, and an Etobicoke Imam.

All speakers emphasized the need for decent work for all Ontarians and called on the government to withdraw Bill 47.

The OFL continued the campaign in its submission to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.



## OFL SPEAKS ON WORKERS' RIGHTS AT COMMITTEE ON BILL 47

In November 2018, OFL President Chris Buckley made a submission to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. He told the committee that Bill 47 must be withdrawn, setting out the ways in which the Bill would disproportionately affect low-wage workers by repealing all of the protections contained in the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act*.

In its submission the OFL wrote: "We will continue to demand better for working people in this province, particularly for racialized workers, women workers, Indigenous workers, immigrant workers, young workers, and workers with disabilities. We will stand up for what is decent and what is right. We're calling on our elected representatives to do the same."

The OFL proposed several amendments to Bill 47 that would contribute to a legislative framework for decent work in this province including changes to the *Employment Standards Act* (ESA), the *Labour Relations Act* (LRA), and the *Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act* (OCTAA).



Ontario Federation of Labour President Chris Buckley speaking at a press conference calling on the government to withdraw Bill 47 at a joint press conference with Fight for \$15 and Fairness.

# HANDS OFF CAMPAIGN RAMPS UP FOR BILL 47

OFL ground and online campaign could leave no doubt – Ontarians did not want Bill 47

While Bill 47 was making its way through the legislature, the OFL pursued an aggressive campaign urging Ontarians to call members of the PC cabinet and email PC MPPs. Through Broadcast Voice Messages connecting Ontarians with key figures in the Ford government to links that made it easy to reach PC MPPs by email, the OFL made it simple for Ontarians to tell the government to withdraw Bill 47.

Ontarians enthusiastically took up the campaign. The sheer number of calls to his office prompted former Minister of Job Creation, Economic Development and Trade Jim Wilson to demand that the phone campaign be ended. The Minister, who had refused previous requests to meet with the OFL, agreed to a meeting with President Chris Buckley during the October 15 Day of Action.

The calls kept flooding in. Ontarians were angry and concerned over losing their workplace rights. In polls during the days leading up to the vote on Bill 47, 77 per cent of Ontarians said that two paid sick days were needed, and more than half were in favor of a higher minimum wage.

Labour activists also arranged a dozen in-person meetings between constituents and their PC MPPs. Actions against Bill 47 were covered extensively in the media.

To read OFL op-eds on Bill 47 please see pages 7 and 8.



## HITTING THE STREETS FOR WORKERS' RIGHTS

Flying campaign mobilizes Ontarians to tell their MPPs to keep decent work laws.



SEIU flyering against Bill 47.

Resistance to Bill 47 was strong across Ontario. As the Bill made its way through the legislature in October and November of 2018, the OFL encouraged Ontarians in key ridings to amplify their opposition to the Bill, which would take away key workplace rights like two paid sick days and cancelling the scheduled increase to a \$15 minimum wage.

The OFL sent flyers to labour councils and activists in ridings across Ontario, and labour councils took up the challenge, organizing mail drops to homes in each riding. The flyers provided information on local MPPs and what Bill 47 would mean for workers in Ontario.

“No matter what they say, Ontario’s economy is thriving with a higher minimum wage,” reads the flyer. “In 2018 alone Ontario has gained 103,000 new jobs. Higher wages mean people have more money to spend at local businesses.”

It then provided emails, phone numbers, and addresses for the MPP, and laid out the ways conservative MPPs were taking away important workplace rights with Bill 47.



Rallying at the Ministry of Labour.

## BILL 47 PASSES DESPITE OPPOSITION BY LABOUR AND COMMUNITY

Bill 47 eliminated paid sick days, cuts wages, makes it easier to fire workers in precarious work, makes it more difficult to join and keep a union, cancels fairer scheduling laws and lowers fines for employers who break the law.

“Passing Bill 47 leaves millions of Ontarians without the protections and wages that are needed for them and their families to thrive in our province,” said Ontario Federation of Labour President Chris Buckley.

“It is clear that workers can’t count on their government to support them. Unions will. I urge all Ontario workers to join a union so they can collectively bargain better rights in their workplaces and keep fighting until these protections are the law for every worker in this province,” added Buckley.

The Ontario economy benefited from the labour law reforms introduced in 2017, with 83,000 new jobs created since the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act* came into effect. Unemployment has also dropped to record lows, after the minimum wage was increased to \$14.

“Passing Bill 47 shows that this government is not considering the real-world effects of decent work laws, which have helped the Ontario economy,” added Buckley. “It also ignores the voices of the people who will be most affected by these laws – women workers, racialized workers, Indigenous workers and

workers with a disability. Now, it will be much easier for unscrupulous employers to take advantage of their employees. I say shame on this government for the damage it has done to Ontario workers.”

Ford’s plan eliminates paid sick days, cuts wages, makes it easier to fire workers in precarious work, makes it more difficult to join and keep a union, cancels fairer scheduling laws and lowers fines for employers who break the law.

This announcement also means a real-dollar wage cut for minimum wage employees.

“Under this new Act, it will be at least 2025 before minimum wage workers see a \$15 minimum wage, and by then it will be, once again, a sub-poverty wage,” said Pam Frache, Coordinator of the Fight for \$15 and Fairness. “Removing equal pay for equal work provisions will increase the gender and equity wage gap, and intensify the discrimination that so many workers face in the labour market,” said Frache.

“We know that without strong workplace protections and a \$15 minimum wage, workers’ health

suffers. We hear from educators that students who face poverty face difficulty learning in school and themselves often work to supplement the low wages of their parents,” said Buckley. “By contrast, a higher minimum wage is good for workers, for the economy, and for our communities. That’s why the labour movement and communities are going to continue to push for changes, including a \$15 minimum wage.”

To read the full statement: [ofl.ca](http://ofl.ca)

### ANGER AT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT OVER NEW YEAR’S EVE TWEET

Rocco Rossi follows months of lobbying against \$15 minimum wage by bragging about his wealth on New Year’s Eve

The evening before the cold reality that minimum wage would not rise would dawn for many Ontario workers, the President of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce Rocco Rossi tweeted gleefully about his prosperity: “Celebrating New Year’s the 1-percenter way!” he tweeted, adding “Let them eat cake.”

OFL President Chris Buckley was quick to respond in a statement.



"This is shameful," he wrote. "Ontario workers fought hard to win new rights in the well-researched changes to the *Employment Standards Act* and the *Labour Relations Act* that came in 2017. Then, Doug Ford tore those advancements away leaving our province with laws and a minimum wage that lags far behind what's needed for Ontarians to work in dignity."

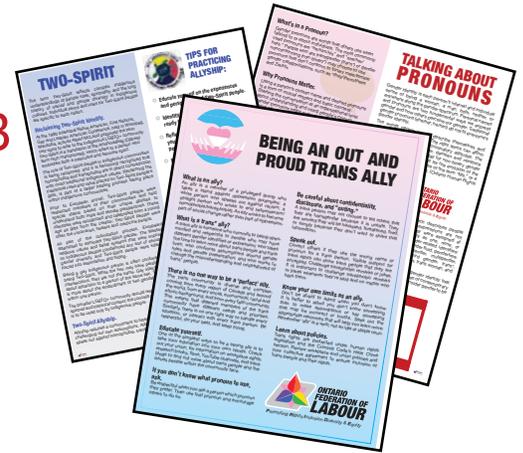
He then urged Ontarians to use their anger to fuel their activism in the New Year.

"Make it your resolution to join with us to defend workers' rights," he wrote. "Talk to your neighbours, your co-workers, your friends and family. Tell them about the damage that Doug Ford and the Progressive Conservatives have done to workers in this province."

"The blame for the hardship facing Ontario workers, particularly those who earn minimum wage, rests squarely on Doug Ford, his regressive conservative government, and the shameful lobby efforts of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce," he added.

# NOVEMBER 20 TRANS\* DAY OF REMEMBRANCE – ALLY IS A VERB

OFL info sheets on how to be an ally launch on Trans\* Day of Remembrance.



November 20 is recognized around the world as the Trans\*gender Day of Remembrance (TDoR). Vigils are held around the world to express love and respect for Trans\*gender people in the face of indifference and hatred.

Allyship with Trans\* and Two-Spirit folks is essential to creating an inclusive and healthy world. For the 2018 Trans\* Day of Remembrance, the OFL launched a series of info sheets on being an ally with Trans\* and Two-Spirit folks.

The info sheets include: Being an Out and Proud Trans\* Ally, Talking About Pronouns, and Tips for Two-Spirit Allyship.

These information sheets are part of public awareness about hate crimes committed against Trans\*gender people and the discrimination, harassment, and violence that is too often a part of their daily lives.

"Discrimination against Trans\* people must end," said OFL Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates. "On the Trans\* Day of Remembrance we must all commit to challenge prejudice and hatred wherever we find it, as we remember the many folks killed by anti-Trans\*gender violence and ensure that their names are not forgotten."



OFL and OHC staff mark Trans\* Day of Remembrance.

## RESISTING FORD'S RECKLESS POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION SCHEME

The Ontario Federation of Labour condemns the Ford government for making post-secondary education less accessible to low-income students and opposes the direct assault on student democracy.

In mid-January, the Ford Government made a major announcement on post-secondary education that would reduce OSAP funding and make it possible for students to “opt-out” of student union dues.

“The OFL stands in solidarity with students across the province. This is an affront to democracy and access to post-secondary education. Education is a right, not a privilege for the few,” said Ontario Federation of Labour President Chris Buckley.

Reforms included the elimination of free tuition for low-income students, and the elimination of the 6-month interest-free grace period to repay student loans. Grants that assist low-income students will be converted into loans, effectively



making post-secondary education more expensive and more difficult to obtain, inevitably increasing student debt.

The announcement of a 10 per cent tuition decrease does little to help students afford a higher education, particularly when paired with the cuts to student financial assistance. Underfunded post-secondary institutions will struggle to cover their budget shortfall, with the likely result of larger class sizes, unregulated tuition fee hikes for international students, and increased reliance on part-time, temporary faculty.

“The introduction of the ‘Student Choice Initiative’ is an attack on the democracy and autonomy of student unions, which are not-for-profit organizations founded by and for students,” said OFL Executive Vice-President, Ahmad Gaied.

Services and representation provided by student unions are paid for by dues that are democratically set by members. These critical services include the coordination of health and dental plans, transit passes, food banks, sexual violence support centres, and academic support and advocacy services. There should be no government interference in students’ democratic decision making. These reforms stifle students’ ability to mobilize and organize on campuses. It reduces political debate and speech on campus as student unions are a necessary platform of engagement for students.

On January 18, the OFL and affiliate labour unions joined with the Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario in opposing these reforms at a rally at Queen’s Park.

## OFL/OHC RALLIES MEET PRE-BUDGET CONSULTATIONS

The OFL and the Ontario Health Coalition held Pre-Budget Rallies in communities across Ontario where the government was holding pre-budget hearings.

Ontarians want improved public health care and other services.

In the provincial election Doug Ford promised repeatedly to "solve hallway medicine" and improve long-term care. But the government has yet to reopen hospital beds, restore closed services, and plan to meet our communities' needs in our local public hospitals.

Each year, care falls farther behind need in long-term care. In fact, Ontario ranks at the bottom of Canada in these issues.

Much more can and must be done to improve services. In the meantime, the government has engaged consultants to come up with plans to cut and privatize health care and other public services.

Ford's health care cuts to date include: OHIP+, cutting investment in mental health by \$335 million, cutting out all new safe injection sites, cutting funding for the College of Midwives after 25 years, cutting education, social assistance, disability and environmental programs.

Rallies were held in six communities across Ontario.

## FIGHTING FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Ontario Federation of Labour joined the call of education unions in Ontario to support and properly fund Ontario's public education systems.

Education has the power to define and change a person's life. The hard work and dedication of educators and support staff and their ability to shape the lives of our young people are of great importance to families across Ontario.

The OFL represents educators and support staff who provide top-quality education and needed and valued support services every day in both official languages in Ontario's public and Catholic school boards. These members work tirelessly to ensure the health and safety of our children and the upkeep and maintenance of their schools and institutions.

Our government must adequately support and fund Ontario's public education systems for this valued public service to our children, their families and our communities to continue.

Last month, the government cut millions of dollars in education funding, mostly from programs meant to serve vulnerable students. This latest move came on the heels of the Ford government's decision to cancel a \$100-million fund earmarked for school repairs, placing Ontario school boards further away from clearing their \$15.9-billion repair backlog.

The OFL strongly urges the Ontario Government, as it formulates the budget priorities for 2019, to take immediate action to reverse these funding cuts and to restore and improve funding levels to ensure Ontario's public education systems are properly resourced at the levels they require to provide high-quality education to Ontarians.

## NEW OFL BOARD MEMBERS



The OFL is happy to welcome two new members to the Executive Board: VP Tyler Downey (SEIU) and VP Persons with a Disability Raymond Joncas (CUPE).

# SPOTLIGHT ON PREVENTION LINK

## UPCOMING TRAINING AND WORKSHOPS

Prevention Link is kicking off 2019 with a tour of its comprehensive Worker's Compensation 101 and Return to Work 101 workshops in more than a dozen cities across Ontario. These courses will provide participants with the information they need to navigate workers' compensation legislation, policies, benefits and services, as well as giving them tools to help assist workers with disabilities. For a list of cities and to register, visit [www.preventionlink.ca](http://www.preventionlink.ca).

A Mental Health First Aid workshop, offered on behalf of the Mental Health Commission of Canada, will be held on February 25-26 in London, Ontario. The two-day course gives participants the skills to provide help to a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. Just as physical first aid is administered to an injured person before medical treatment can be offered or until the crisis is resolved. To register for and upcoming workshop, visit [www.preventionlink.ca](http://www.preventionlink.ca) or email [info@preventionlink.ca](mailto:info@preventionlink.ca) to request a training in your workplace.

A majority of OFL and Prevention Link staff recently completed the new Mental Health First Aid workshop available under Prevention Link's topical training curriculum. Prevention Link's Erin Doucette and Jody Jones are certified instructors of the workshop, which will next be offered on February 25-26 in London, Ontario. "This course is an invaluable part of the ongoing effort to break the stigma surrounding mental health and illness faced by many Ontarians," says Doucette. "The benefits of this course are far-reaching and I strongly encourage everyone to take it." For more information and to register for the workshop, visit [www.preventionlink.ca](http://www.preventionlink.ca).

## SPRING SCHOOL

Prevention Link's 2019 Spring School will be held at Bayview Wildwood Resort, March 24-March 29. The comprehensive week-long workers' compensation training will explore Rights & Obligations, Benefits & Services, Return to Work and Medical Orientation. Detailed course descriptions, pre-requisites and registration information can be found at [www.preventionlink.ca](http://www.preventionlink.ca).



# PREVENTION LINK AWARDS

The Prevention Link team wrapped up 2018 by recognizing committed provincial activists who have made a difference in the prevention of work-related injury and disease, and the work of those who have led the struggle for justice and fair compensation for injured workers in Ontario.

Prevention Link awards are presented to activists in workers' compensation and disability prevention rights. Our activists do their best to ensure workplaces are safe and injuries are avoided, but the unfortunate reality is that workers do get injured at work and are often poisoned by substances in their workplace.

The OFL Prevention Link award gives recognition to an injured workers' representative who is an injured workers' final line of defense, ensuring they receive all the benefits and services they are entitled to, steering them through a complex and often intimidating system.

Orlando Buonastella, with Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), was the recipient of the Prevention Link Activist award. A seasoned advocate, Buonastella is an intelligent, articulate and dedicated activist who has committed the better part of his life to fighting for the rights of workers, specifically injured workers, through individual cases and fighting for legislative reform. Whether participating in outreach education sessions and training workshops across the province, representing and guiding injured

workers through difficult appeals, developing the Injured Worker Speaker School, preserving the history and strength of the injured worker movement, campaigning for positive change in workers' compensation policy and law, or creating vivid street theatre, Buonastella's collaborative, inclusive and empathetic approach has earned him the respect and affection of injured workers and colleagues across the province.

Debbie Coulson with the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) Local 793, was awarded the OFL Prevention Link - Disability Prevention at Work award. The award gives recognition to a community advocate who is often an injured workers' final line of defense.

Sarah Neath, a United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 175 Workers' Compensation Representative, was recently presented with a Prevention Link Activist award. The award recognized Neath's efforts in assisting members with WSIB claims and applauded her community and political activism in Guelph. Prevention Link's Executive Director, Rob Halpin, presented Neath the award on behalf of OFL Officers and staff.



Orlando Buonastella, OFL Prevention Link Activist Award recipient, with Prevention Link Director, Laurie Hardwick.



Left to right: Rob Halpin, Prevention Link Activist award winner Sarah Neath, Janice Folk-Dawson, and Tim Dealstra



Debbie Coulson, International Union of Operating Engineers, Laurie Hardwick, Director of Prevention Link, and Maureen Weinberger, President of Oakville and District Labour Council.

## TOGETHER WE RISE: STANDING AGAINST HATE

For International Human Rights Day, the OFL launched an info sheet on how to intervene when you see harassment or discrimination.

Equality is one of the fundamental values on which the labour movement was formed.

Together we will continue to stand against hate in all its forms, but it's difficult to remember a time when the forces of division have been so blatant.

When our values are under fire, we must take every opportunity to oppose

peddlers of bigotry and attacks on the powerful diversity of our country. The Ontario Federation of Labour continues to take a leading role in standing against hate.

Experts say Canadians should be concerned

about the rise of hate groups in this country. There are, at minimum, 130 active right-wing extremist groups across Canada. Most of these groups are organized around ideologies against religion and race with anti-Muslim, anti-Black and anti-Jewish sentiments being the most common, followed by hate against immigrants, Indigenous peoples, women, LGBTQ+ communities and other minorities.

Statistics show that hate crimes are on the rise in Canada. Data from Statistics Canada shows that two thirds of people who believed they were victims of hate crimes did not report these incidents to police. Between 80 and 85 per cent of hate crimes go unreported.

Visit [ofl.ca](http://ofl.ca) to download the info sheet on how to intervene when you see harassment or discrimination.



# OFL CONDEMNS FEDERAL GOVERNMENT USE OF BACK-TO-WORK LEGISLATION IN CUPW STRIKE

By passing back-to-work legislation to end the strike by CUPW workers seeking fairer and safer working conditions, the federal government has undermined the constitutional rights of all Canadians.

CUPW held rolling strikes in facilities across Canada after Canada Post refused to address concerns about forced overtime, pay equity, and the high rate of workplace injuries. The OFL joined CUPW on the picket lines and rallied at Minister Bill Morneau's office in Toronto.

The federal government ordered postal workers off the picket line in late November.

"The right to strike is enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. All Canadians should be concerned by the ease with which the government has stepped in to ignore workers' rights and end this job action," said Ontario Federation of Labour President Chris Buckley. "CUPW suffer the most injuries of any profession, are being forced to work long hours of overtime, and face pay inequalities that should not be tolerated in any workplace."

Coming to the bargaining table to improve working conditions, then

taking strike action to defend workers' rights is one of the most important ways that workers can make gains for themselves, their co-workers, and future generations of workers.

"Striking is a last resort when an employer will not work to reach a reasonable collective agreement with their workers. For the federal government to use legislation to silence these workers' important calls for change is disrespectful and sets a dangerous precedent," said Buckley.

The OFL continues to support CUPW members in their demand for decent work.



OFL Executive Vice-President Ahmad Gaied joined the CUPW rotating picket lines, along with OFL staff.



OFL President Chris Buckley spoke against back-to-work legislation at a rally at Minister Bill Morneau's office.

(photo by Rechev Brown)



Pearl Sawyer

## PEARL SAWYER RETIRES: LOOKING BACK ON MORE THAN 30 YEARS OF ACTIVISM



Pearl Sawyer, the OFL's longest-serving executive board member, is leaving her position after 33 years. A staunch labour activist, Sawyer was also the first woman elected as president of her local when she was a member of UFCW 1000A, which is now 1006A. She also served as International Vice-President and a representative for UFCW in two global union federations. She joined the OFL Executive Board in 1985.

"Sawyer has played a very important role as the Federation pushed for workers' rights through some of the toughest times in Ontario, including the Harris years," said OFL President Chris Buckley. "I want to thank her for her work with the Federation, women's committee, health and safety and workers comp committees, and her years of dedication to workers' rights."

"Pearl's work for women and marginalized groups has blazed a trail since she started in the labour movement," said OFL Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates. "She has been an important part of the labour

movement's successes. It has been a pleasure to work with her at the OFL."

"Pearl has contributed to many significant changes for workers in the province of Ontario," said OFL Executive Vice-President Ahmad Gaied. "Perhaps one of her greatest contributions and qualities is her ability to make room for new activists to participate, especially those that identify with an equity group. She has opened up many doors, and held them open for many activists in the labour movement. Thank you Pearl."

Two things inspired Sawyer to get involved with her union: firstly, a national labour action, and then fighting to end women's inequality in the workplace.

Her first picket line was a solidarity picket with a CUPE local in PEI when she was a student. She saw them walking back and forth, and asked them what it was about. It was the cleaning staff at the University demanding better conditions. She said, "ok I'll support you," and joined the line.

In the mid-70s, negotiations between UFCW and Canada Packers were foundering, and the union launched a work-to-rule campaign. Sawyer was acclaimed shop steward for UFCW 282P as the action approached. Thanks to time zones, her plant was the first to launch the campaign, which started at midnight.

"I was mobilized," she said.

She was also inspired to fight for gender equality at her plant when she was laid off even though men with less seniority were kept on. After a grievance and a human rights

complaint, she was offered a job and stayed on.

In her work with the OFL she has been part of winning significant changes in Ontario.

"For me one of our greatest achievements was the election of an NDP government in Ontario, which established a bi-partite Board of Directors for the Workers' Compensation Board," said Sawyer. "That Board influenced the policy agenda of the WCB and ensured that workers got a fairer system. It proved that workers and employers are better served through a bi-partite Board of Directors."

She says the cuts that the Ford government has made to employer WCB premiums is shameful, but with years of activism under her belt, Sawyer knows that when gains seem impossible it's important to look to key achievements, and always fight one day more.

"I have followed these principles and they have served me well," she said. "They have opened doors for me to expand my activism."

Sawyer has a message for labour activists as Ontario moves forward into the Doug Ford era.

"I don't know what I'm doing next, but I know I won't be rolling over and playing dead," she said. "Never give up. If you feel you can't go on, take a bit of downtime to reflect and recharge, then get back out there."

Glacier Effe-Samuel, Local 1006A and a member of UFCW National Council, will take Pearl Sawyer's place on the OFL Board.



Pearl Sawyer (4th from the right) behind the podium at the OFL convention.

# WOMEN'S MARCH SHOWS THE POWER OF MANY



Across Ontario women joined the global march for equality on Saturday, January 19.



Women's March at Nathan Phillips Square, Toronto

"We are not going back."

"Power of Many."

These are the slogans under which women across Ontario took to the streets as part of the global Women's March. There were 18 marches across Ontario.

Women marched to bring awareness to the changes needed to build a safer, more inclusive Ontario.

With the government poised to make further cuts to programming that supports women's equality, the OFL launched a petition campaign to fight Bill 66 to restore programs that have been cut by the Ontario government. The petition was made available to download, sign online, or sign by text.

"Women demand equality. That means pay equity, publicly funded child care, decent work, an end to racism and hate, and an end to domestic and sexual violence. This government wants to roll back women's rights, but we are not going back," said Ontario Federation

of Labour Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates. "We are marching to show the Power of Many. Women are coming together to say yes to equal rights at work, at home, and in law, and yes to working together to win them."

Last summer, the government shut down the expert panel on ending violence against women. Last month, the government passed Bill 57, cancelling the slated January 1 implementation of the *Pay Trans\*parency Act, 2018*. It recently introduced Bill 66, which if passed, will remove a number of laws and regulations that support women's equality, including changes to child care regulations and work laws.

"Women know that when we come together and push for change, we can win," said Coates. "Women are 50 per cent of the voters in this province. It's time for the government to meet our demands."

"Women, men and gender non-conforming people, Indigenous and immigrants, of diverse faiths, abilities and ages are all deserving of equality, justice, freedom, and inclusion," said Coates.

The OFL encourages everyone to download the petition demanding the government reverse course, withdraw Bill 66 and restore all programs and laws that support women's equality. It can be downloaded at [OFL.ca](http://OFL.ca) and signed at [www.myrights.ca/womens\\_petition](http://www.myrights.ca/womens_petition), or by texting the word WOMEN to 647-496-5602.



Handmade signs at the Women's March



Grey Bruce Labour Council Women's March.



Banners to welcome Women's March participants to Queen's Park.



Marching for women's rights in Kawartha.



Marching to Queen's Park.



Collecting petition signatures at the Toronto women's march.



London Labour Council Women's March.



CBLC Women's March.

## DECEMBER 6 STATEMENT: ACT TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AT WORK, IN LAW, AND IN POLICY

December 6, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women remembers the 14 women killed at École Polytechnique de Montréal.

A UN report shows that this year alone 50,000 women around the world have been killed by an intimate partner. In Canada a woman loses her life to gender-based violence every six days. The number killed as an indirect result of sexist policies and laws is much higher.

On December 6, the OFL called on the Ontario government to end violence against women by restoring programs and policies to end gender-based violence. These include the scheduled 33 per cent funding increase to Ontario Rape Crisis Centres, restoring the modernized health and physical education curriculum, and restarting the Roundtable on Gender-based Violence.

“The Ford government must act to end gender-based violence by creating conditions where women have economic justice, equality and safety in our province,” said Ontario Federation of Labour President Chris Buckley. “Instead, it has cut decent work laws and important resources, tools and funding to programs that worked to end gender-based violence. As someone who grew up in a home where there was domestic violence, I know the importance of these resources for everyone in Ontario.”

“The cancellation of programs like the Roundtable on Gender-based Violence shows that this government does not take violence against women seriously,” said OFL Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates.

“Beyond cancelling important programs and funding, government cuts to decent work laws, and the cancellation of \$15 minimum wage will affect women deeply, since women are more likely to be employed in low-wage work. Without economic security many women will be unable to leave situations where they experience domestic violence.”

“It is important to acknowledge that racialized women, Indigenous women, and women with disabilities are more likely to face domestic and sexual violence,” said OFL Executive Vice-President Ahmad Gaided. “We cannot separate the struggle to end violence against women from our work to end ableism, racism, hate, Islamophobia, and bigotry.”

The OFL continues to promote its booklet on bargaining domestic violence leave: *Domestic Violence Goes to Work Every Day: A Bargaining Guide*, and encourages everyone to sign the CLC #donewaiting petition for laws that will end gender-based violence.

## BE PART OF THE POWER OF MANY: MARCH 8 PROJECT

Join the March 8 project by ordering your posters and pins today. The deadline for ordering is February 11.

For nine years, the OFL has been creating posters and pins for International Women’s Day. The pins are sold at cost plus 25 cents, with all surplus funds going to organizations selected by the OFL Women’s Committee that advance the equality of women.

“In every workplace and in every community, women are bonding together to put equity on the agenda and to lift our sisters within our unions and in our communities,” said Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates. “We aren’t going backwards! This poster is bold and unequivocal. There is no doubt that women workers will be proudly showing sisterhood solidarity for years to come.”

This year’s theme is “Power of Many.” Both the pewter pin and poster are works of art that our members and community partners will value for many years to come.

Last year’s surplus funds went to support the following organizations and campaigns: Equal Pay Coalition’s Equal Pay Day Campaign, sponsoring five girls to attend the CBTU Summer



Youth Program, Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day, and the Northern Indigenous Food Bank.

Posters are available for \$1 per poster, and pins are \$3.60 for orders of 500 or more. For smaller orders, the pin price is \$3.85. Shipping costs are added to the final price.

The deadline for ordering pins is February 11, 2019, and pins and posters can be ordered online from [Poster myunionstore.com/iwd](http://Poster.myunionstore.com/iwd) or [maboutiquesyndicale.com/8mars](http://maboutiquesyndicale.com/8mars).

If you have any questions, please contact Anna Zhyn at [azhyn@ofl.ca](mailto:azhyn@ofl.ca) or 416-441-2731.



## LABOUR MOVEMENT STANDS WITH OSHAWA GM WORKERS

OFL demands action from the government and sends solidarity to workers as GM announces plant closure in violation of collective agreement.

On November 25, Ontarians learned that GM was poised to announce it would be closing the GM plant in Oshawa.

In an open letter, Ontario Federation of Labour President Chris Buckley called on the Labour movement to support workers at GM.

“Premier Doug Ford is not taking this crisis for Ontario workers seriously. When asked about the Oshawa plant closure and what he would do to protect jobs, Ford responded he’s been told by GM ‘that ship has left the dock.’ This is the last thing Oshawa workers need, a Premier who will not use all the tools of government to help them. Workers in Durham Region need all levels of government pulling for them.

Doug Ford is abandoning the people of Oshawa, we expect more from him. He has cancelled the cap and trade program, which was expected to invest millions into research and development. He has resisted green energy initiatives, which would keep the Ontario economy at the cutting edge. Clearly, these decisions do not make Ontario ‘Open for Business.’

It is not only autoworkers in Oshawa that will be affected by this plant closure. For every job at the plant, nine more jobs are created in related businesses right here in Ontario. GM’s action today has the potential

to affect more than 30,000 jobs in this province.”

In an open letter to Doug Ford, Buckley called on the Premier to fulfill his promise to protect workers in Ontario:

“You can take immediate steps,” he wrote. “You can reinstate the *Green Energy Act*. Your government’s decision to scrap several environmental policies, such as the rebate program for Ontarians’ purchasing electric and hydrogen vehicles, is sending the wrong message to GM. Cancelling this program means the U.S. now has more generous incentives for electric vehicle sales than Ontario does.

“By ensuring Ontario is ‘open for business’ in the estimated \$26-trillion global clean economy – we can ensure that Oshawa, and in fact all of Ontario, is poised to play a leading role in the development and production of emergent future technologies. GM has made it no secret that they are Transforming their business to meet the future demand of green, electric and autonomous vehicles.

“Premier Ford, you were elected to lead our Province. Now is the time to join with us, exercise your power to influence, and take a leadership role in joining the fight to keep GM in Oshawa.”

To read the open letters in full: [ofl.ca](http://ofl.ca).

## OFL JOINED EDUCATION WORKERS FOR ANTI-BILL 47 RALLIES AT PC CONVENTION

On November 16, with the government poised to cancel decent work laws and the \$15 minimum wage, education workers, labour and community came together to send the message: hands off decent work laws and \$15 minimum wage.

Since taking office, Doug Ford and the Progressive Conservative Party have made cuts to social assistance, and cancelled important health curriculum. The vote on Bill 47 was imminent when the Durham teachers local of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) in collaboration with the Ontario Federation of Labour and community groups across Ontario held rallies outside the PC convention.

The rally was held to protect two paid sick days and a \$15 minimum wage for students and parents across Ontario, rights that 77 per cent of Ontarians support.

"The labour movement across Ontario is here for this action at the PC Convention to send the message that the government of Ontario must ensure decent work laws and the January 1, 2019 increase to a \$15 minimum wage," said Ontario Federation of Labour Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates. "We know that low wages and precarious work has a negative effect on students' learning, hurts the health of Ontarians, and pushes people into poverty. This government must withdraw Bill 47."

"As education professionals we see the harsh impact poverty has on children when families live paycheque to paycheque. ETFO adds its voice to the majority of what Ontarians already support and with the WE the People Action, we are sending a message to this government to withdraw Bill 47 and invest in public services," said ETFO President Sam Hammond. "The attack on paid sick days and a \$15 minimum wage is unjust, it's unfair and quite honestly, it's a petty way to punish workers for an illness or sick kids."

"I teach in the Durham region. I see kids coming to class sick because their parents are precariously employed and they can't stay home to get better. I see how families are struggling to make ends meet and it hurts the students and it hurts their ability to learn," said Angie Inglis, elementary teacher in Whitby, Ontario. "The Ford government needs to withdraw Bill 47 for the sake of the people of Ontario."



## REMEMBERING BILL STEEP

Former 1st Vice-President of Chatham-Kent Labour Council passed away on October 26

William Erven "Bill" Steep of Wallaceburg and formerly of Brantford passed away peacefully at Chatham-Kent Health Alliance, Chatham Campus on Friday, October 26, 2018 at the age of 77.

His work in the labour movement will be remembered.

Bill Steep was the 2007 Co-Chair of United Way of Chatham-Kent, he served two terms as President of the Chatham Kent United Way, served as a board member for the Sydenham District Hospital, Wallaceburg, and was a retired international representative for the United Steel Workers. He was 1st Vice-President of the Chatham-Kent Labour Council, and co-founder of the Labour Gardens in Chatham.



# OFL DEFENDS DECENT WORK AND PUBLIC SERVICES



The OFL continues to push the government on workers rights and public services with submissions on Bills 47, 57, 36, and the upcoming Ontario budget.

## DO THE RIGHT THING: STAND UP FOR WORKERS

Submission  
to the Standing  
Committee on  
Finance and  
Economic Affairs  
November 2018



### **BILL 47: MAKING ONTARIO OPEN FOR BUSINESS ACT**

In November 2018, the OFL deputized and provided a written submission on Bill 47, *Making Ontario Open for Business Act*, imploring the government to do the right thing and stand up for workers. Bill 47 wrongly eliminates paid sick days, cuts wages, equal pay for equal work, makes it easier to fire workers in precarious work, makes it more difficult to join and keep a union, cancels fairer scheduling laws and lowers fines for employers who break the law.

For more information, please read the OFL's submission on Bill 47 which can be found at [OFL.ca](http://OFL.ca).

### **BILL 57, RESTORING TRUST, TRANSPARENCY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT**

In November 2018, the OFL provided a written submission on Bill 57, *Restoring Trust, Transparency, and Accountability Act* – the legislation that accompanied the

Fall Economic Statement. The OFL strongly advocated that the government introduce the \$15 general minimum wage in lieu of a tax credit, immediately implement the *Pay Transparency Act*, remove provisions that undermine the working conditions of full-time fire fighters in municipalities, reinstate independent Officers of the Legislative Assembly, and restore all of their protections.

For more information, please read the OFL's submission on Bill 57 which can be found at [OFL.ca](http://OFL.ca).

### **BILL 36, THE CANNABIS STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT**

In October 2018, the OFL provided a written submission on Bill 36, the *Cannabis Statute Law Amendment Act*, which dramatically shifts how Ontarians have access to recreational cannabis. The OFL strongly advocated that the sale of recreational cannabis be delivered through a publicly owned operation – one that is guided by policy objectives of public health and public safety as well as predicated on decent jobs. We also endorsed the recommendations of OPSEU.

For more information, please read the OFL's submission on Bill 36 which can be found at [OFL.ca](http://OFL.ca).

### **PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION**

In January 2019, the OFL deputized and provided a written submission on the upcoming budget, demanding that the government fight for the rights of women, people of colour, Indigenous peoples, LGBTQ+ persons, and people requiring accommodation; and against racism and the rise of hate. They must also implement fair taxation measures, establish a framework for universal and affordable child care, pharma care, dental care, post-secondary education, and housing; protect and expand pensions; and implement anti-poverty measures.



For more information and recommendations, please read the OFL's pre-budget submission at [ofl.ca](http://ofl.ca).

# OP-ED ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RATES AND DECENT WORK: ONTARIO WORKERS ARE ON THE BRINK



When the Ford government declares Ontario “open for business,” what it really means is forcing more Ontarians into precarious, low-wage work, wrote OFL President Chris Buckley and Director of Advocacy & Legal Services, Income Security Advocacy Centre Mary Marrone on November 6.

Ontario's new Conservative government is cancelling many of the decent work laws that buoyed up the economic stability and work quality of families across Ontario. They are also freezing the minimum wage at \$14 until October 2020 before indexing it to inflation. This 33-month freeze on the minimum wage is a real-dollar loss for families that are already treading water financially.

When the government declares Ontario “open for business,” what it really means is forcing more Ontarians into precarious, low-wage work.

1.7 million Ontarians earn at or near the minimum wage. For these workers, tough choices are the norm: pay the bills or buy medication? Get school supplies or pay for Trans\*it tokens? A higher minimum wage and decent work laws made those painful decisions unnecessary for many.

With the decent work laws set to be repealed, many workers and their families will not only be unable to get ahead, they will be left further behind.

No longer will parents have access to paid emergency or sick leave. No longer are these families anticipating what they might do with another \$1,850 a year after a \$15 minimum wage arrives. Now, that raise won't arrive until long after 2020, when it will be too little, too late.

Workers need paid personal emergency leave days so that they can afford to stay home when they are ill. Equal pay for equal work lessens Ontario's gender pay gap and means families can reliably predict what a job will bring in. Workers counting on the fairer scheduling provision in Bill 148 will be stuck juggling the schedules of multiple jobs and family commitments without any sense of stability.

The sad truth is that many workers who felt the improvements from our updated labour and employment laws may now be pushed onto social assistance.

Creating even more uncertainty is the government's plan for social assistance. It has already reversed a modest three per cent rate increase that was to

take effect this fall and 18 other rule changes that would have improved the lives of people on social assistance. Instead, it only provided a 1.5 per cent increase, and it will announce a new direction for social assistance on Nov. 8. We know this government will focus on moving people from social assistance to work.

By weakening both employment standards and the social safety net, the government is perpetuating a cycle where workers are trapped moving between low-waged work and social assistance, with neither providing a path out of poverty.

Freezing wages and lowering workplace standards will create a perfect storm that will leave more Ontarians in poverty and ensure that our government is increasing its own long-term costs.

By telling corporations that they can ignore workers' rights, the government is prioritizing the profits of big business at the expense of the well-being of workers and their families.



The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists Canada and the Ontario Federation of Labour presents



## Legacies of Labour and Community Activism Series: in celebration of African Liberation and Black History Month

# Generations of Justice



**JUNE VEECOCK**  
Coalition of Black Trade Unionists



**SANDY HUDSON**  
Black Lives Matter



**BROMLEY ARMSTRONG**  
Urban Alliance on Race Relations

## Our Struggle Continues

The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists Canada, and the Ontario Federation of Labour are celebrating African Liberation and Black History Month by launching a new series: *Legacies of Labour and Community Activism*.

The *Legacies* series honours the historical achievements of African Canadians and features the ongoing contributions of activists in the Black community.

Generations of justice activists like June Veecock, Sandy Hudson and Bromley Armstrong are recognized for their unwavering commitment to end anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, and racial inequality in all its forms.

Their struggle to end racist policies continues today. In downtown Toronto, a Black man is 17 times more likely to be pulled over for a police street check than a white man. Racialized women earn 58 cents for every dollar earned by white men, a gap that has only been reduced by 5 cents since 2006.

The OFL and CBTU call on the government of Ontario to immediately stop the discriminatory practice of carding and to enact legislation to end racist pay practices.



Artwork by Robert Small: [thelegacyposter.com](http://thelegacyposter.com)

For more information, please visit [ofl.ca](http://ofl.ca) and [cbtu.ca](http://cbtu.ca).



## NEW SERIES LAUNCHED FOR AFRICAN LIBERATION AND BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Inaugural poster honours Bromley Armstrong, June Veacock, and Sandy Hudson.

To celebrate African Liberation and Black History Month the OFL and CBTU are launching a new annual project honouring activists in Black communities in Ontario.

The project will include a poster and a landing page on ofl.ca with information about the project, as well as biographical information about each of the honourees.

The 2019 project also includes public facing advertisements, drawing attention to the need to end the discriminatory practice of carding. The public facing advertisements will be seen in video ads in the downtown PATH, as well as the 82 screens of the International Newstand Network from February 1-28.

Finally, the project will call Ontarians to action by inviting them to sign a petition to end carding immediately either online at [myrights.ca](http://myrights.ca) or by downloading a printable copy at [ofl.ca](http://ofl.ca).

# OFL TO FORD GOVERNMENT: TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION TO END STREET CHECKS



The Ontario Federation of Labour urged the Doug Ford government to take immediate action on the clear recommendation of Justice Michael Tulloch to put an end to the practice of arbitrary or “random” carding.

Labour has been speaking up against carding for the better part of three decades. In the Independent Street Checks Review final report Justice Tulloch confirmed what community and labour organizations have stated for years. The impacts of arbitrary police carding are felt disproportionately by racialized people in Ontario – specifically, Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities, young people and those who are denied economic opportunities and access to good jobs. Further, no data exists to show that carding addresses or prevents crime; neither does it promote public confidence.

“The government has received the Independent Street Checks Review with the clear recommendation to end arbitrary carding. Minister Jones and the Premier need to act immediately with an outright banning of the practice, a full elimination,” said OFL President, Chris Buckley.

It has been estimated that Black people are 17 times more likely to be carded in downtown Toronto and three times more likely in Brampton and Mississauga. The data that has been collected through carding has had a negative impact on many law-abiding

citizens including loss of employment and education opportunities.

“A full elimination of carding is the right thing to do and will be a critical step to rebuilding the trust of police within racialized communities,” said Ahmad Gaied, OFL Executive Vice-President. “Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities have been unnecessarily targeted by police across Ontario. The discriminatory surveillance practices of carding or street checks have left many feeling as though they are prisoners in their own communities,” said Gaied.

The OFL alongside allies such as Black Lives Matter and the Colour of Poverty – Colour of Change – have called attention to systemic racism and violence targeted towards racialized communities through policing and advocates for the full elimination of the practice of carding.

For African Liberation and Black History Month, the OFL has launched a petition calling for an end to carding. You can download the petition at [ofl.ca](http://ofl.ca), or sign online at [myrights.ca](http://myrights.ca).



## OFL PRESSES FOR CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION OF ANOTHER WORKER DEATH AT FIERA FOODS



On October 25, 2018 a worker in his 40s was pinned between a tractor trailer and a loading dock at Upper Crust, a company owned by Fiera Foods.

It is sadly not the first time a temporary agency worker has been killed at a Fiera Foods operation.

In October of 1999 Ivan Golyashov, 16, was killed in an unguarded dough maker at Fiera Foods. He too was a temp agency worker. The company was charged by the Ministry of Labour (MOL) and received a \$150,000 fine.

Then in December of 2011, just after midnight, another temp agency worker was killed on the grounds of the plant by a Transport truck as it was backing up. A lack of barriers and lighting were blamed for that death and Marmora Freezing Corporation (Fiera Foods) was fined \$150,000 dollars.

On September 2, 2016, Amina Diaby, 23, was killed when a conveyor belt caught a piece of her clothing and she became entangled in an unguarded machine. She had been sent to work at the Fiera plant by a temp agency and had been on the job less than three weeks when she was killed. The company was charged by the Ministry of Labour, plead guilty, and was fined \$300,000 for her death.

Too many employers treat temp agency workers as a disposable commodity, relegating them to precarious and dangerous work. The passage of Bill 47 repealed protections for temp workers by removing the requirement to pay them the same as permanent employees. Workers should not be subjected to unsafe working conditions.

Under Bill C-45, every worker who is killed at work must have their death investigated through the lens of C-45 to assess whether criminal negligence by the employer was the cause of their death. When a worker is killed at work the OFL writes to the investigating police force to ensure they follow this directive.



## OFL PROTESTS BACK-TO-WORK LEGISLATION FOR POWER WORKERS UNION

When the Premier threatened back-to-work legislation for power workers before any strike action was taken, the OFL spoke up.

“Charter rights must be upheld in all cases, they are fundamental to democracy,” said Ontario Federation of Labour President Chris Buckley. “If Ontarians allow this government to treat Charter rights as though they are flimsy protections, that is what they will become, and we will all suffer as a result.”

“These workers have not even gone on strike yet, and the government is proposing back-to-work legislation. The speed with which this government tosses out Charter rights should worry every Ontarian. This time it is power workers, but there is no telling who will be on the receiving end of these rash actions next,” said Buckley. “Once again, the government is quick to strip workers of their rights by meddling in a free and fair collective bargaining process.”

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## February 1–28, 2019 BLACK HISTORY MONTH

This month, events are held across the country to celebrate Black History in Canada.

## February 14, 2019 WOMEN'S ANNUAL MEMORIAL MARCHES FOR MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN (MMIW)

Each February 14, marches and ceremonies are held across Canada to remember Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and to demand action to improve conditions for Indigenous women across Canada.

## February 20, 2019 WORLD DAY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

The United Nations' (UN) World Day of Social Justice is annually observed on February 20 to encourage people to look at how social justice affects poverty eradication. It also focuses on the goal of achieving full employment and support for social integration.

## February 28, 2019 INTERNATIONAL RSI AWARENESS DAY

A day to draw attention to the causes and prevention of repetitive strain injuries.

## March 8, 2019 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

International Women's Day is a time to reflect on progress made, to call for change and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by ordinary women who have played an extraordinary role in the history of their countries and communities.

## March 21, 2019 INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is observed annually on MArch 21. On that day, in 1960, police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa, against the apartheid pass laws.

## March 25, 2019 POWER OF MANY: TAKE BACK ONTARIO CONFERENCE

A one-day conference to share knowledge, discuss strategies and coordinate a province-wide fightback strategy for the coming months and years. This event is open to labour and community. To register: [oflevents.ca](http://oflevents.ca)

## April 9, 2019 (not confirmed as yet) EQUAL PAY DAY

On this day a woman, on average, has worked enough to earn as much as a man made the previous year.

## April 10, 2019 DAY OF PINK (ANTI-BULLYING DAY)

The International Day of Pink is an anti-bullying event held annually on the second Wednesday of April.

## April 22, 2019 EARTH DAY

A growing partnership between worker representatives, environmentalists and community health groups has raised awareness of healthy, sustainable work.

## April 28, 2019 NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING

Events are hosted by labour councils across Ontario. Contact your local labour council for more information.

## May 1, 2019 MAY DAY

## May 1–31, 2019 ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

In December 2001, the Senate adopted a motion proposed by Senator Vivienne Poy to officially designate May as Asian Heritage Month in Canada.

## May–September 2019 COMMUNITY PRIDE EVENTS

## May 15, 2019 100 ANNIVERSARY OF THE WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE

In Winnipeg on 15 May, negotiations broke down between management and labour in the building and metal trades. The Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council called a general strike. The strike lasted six weeks until it was finally brought to an end by the tragic events of Bloody Saturday June 21, 1919. Two men were killed, and 27 others injured when strikers fought mounted police. The strike was officially over on June 26, 1919.

## May 17, 2019 INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA

The International Day Against Homophobia, Trans\*phobia and Biphobia is observed on May 17 and aims to coordinate international events that raise awareness of LGBTQ rights violations and stimulate interest in LGBTQ rights work worldwide.

# THE OFL TEAM

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

ROB HALPIN

## CONTROLLER:

JANE LIU

## OFL & PREVENTION LINK STAFF

(In alphabetical order by last name)

MELISA BAYON, Director of Political Action and Outreach, OFL

JUDY CHOW, Executive Secretary, OFL (President, Exec. VP and Exec. Assistant)

ERIN DOUCETTE, Return-to-Work Coordinator, PL

VERN EDWARDS, Health & Safety Director, OFL

SUE FRATRIC, Secretary, PL

LAURIE HARDWICK, Director, PL

PAULETTE HAZEL, Executive Secretary (Secretary-Treasurer & Administration), OFL

OGHO IKHALO, Senior Communications and Outreach Specialist, PL

JODY JONES, Return-to-work Coordinator, PL

BRIAN MORGAN, Production Coordinator

CHANDRA-LI PAUL, Campaign Engagement Organizer, OFL

MEAGAN PERRY, Communications Director, OFL

RENATA PUCEK, Bookkeeper, OFL

ETHIRAJU RAMACHANDAR, Administrator/Finance, PL

AMALIA SAVVA, Administrative Support, OFL

CARROL ANNE SCEVIOUR, Human Rights and Women's Director, OFL

THEVAKI THEVARATNAM, Research and Education Director, OFL

ANNA ZHYN, Administrative Support, OFL

## New staff:

Welcome to Anna Zhyn our new administrative support staff!

# SPRING SCHOOL »»» 2019

**Bayview Wildwood Resort**  
Port Stanton

Take a comprehensive week-long workers' compensation training that offers courses to certify you in preventing and reducing the impacts of workplace injury/illness.

**Who should attend?**

WSIB representatives, RTW specialists, H&S reps., union leadership and union stewards.

**MARCH 24-29, 2019**

**Location:** Bayview Wildwood Resort  
1500 Port Stanton Pkwy  
Severn Bridge, ON

**Cost:** \$1,195\* (based on double occupancy)  
\$1,495\* (based on single occupancy)

\*Includes room and meal plan

**For further information:**

Tel. (416) 443-7683  
Toll-Free: 1-800-668-9138  
Fax: (416) 441-0722  
e-mail: [info@preventionlink.ca](mailto:info@preventionlink.ca)

**COURSES OFFERED:**

- » Level 1, Rights & Obligations  
Level 2, Benefits & Services  
(no pre-requisite)
- » Return to Work  
(pre-requisite Level 1 & 2)
- » Medical Orientation  
(pre-requisite: Appeals & Dispute Resolution or Return to Work)

**\$50 discount**

**(book before Feb. 28)**

