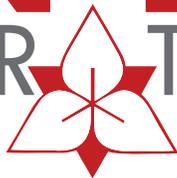




ACTION REPORT

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR

FALL 2016



VOLUME 6, ISSUE 4

SPECIAL FEATURE: THOUSANDS RALLY FOR DECENT WORK PAGES 4-6

OFL OFFICERS

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Secretary-Treasurer



Patty Coates

Executive Vice-President



Ahmad Gaied

ACTION REPORT

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR

VOL. 6 NO. 3
FALL 2016



PHOTO: ARNIE DE VAAN

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ACTION REPORT

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR

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

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**WELCOME TO OUR
NEW AFFILIATES:**

UNIFOR LOCAL 28

UNIFOR LOCAL 673

FRONT COVER PHOTO: ROSE HA



@CHRISBUCKLEYOFL

Sisters and Brothers,

I write this almost one year into the term of the OFL leadership. Since we began we have been working diligently to reinvigorate the OFL, and I am proud to say that our efforts are taking root.

In the first week of October, which we have named the Week for Decent Work, our campaign Make It Fair took to Queen's Park in cooperation with our community partners Fight for \$15 and Fairness. The OFL launched the week with a very successful Rally for Decent Work on October 1. That event brought together people from across our province who want better conditions for Ontario's workers. Thousands joined us to call for the changes that the Ontario government must make to bring its employment laws up to date.

The workers who spoke at that rally were inspiring. They came from across the province to tell their stories and demand the change that Ontario workers need. We heard calls for significant action including card-check certification, paid sick days for all workers, workers' rights applied equally across the board, and protections against contract flipping. Unionized, non-unionized and migrant workers stood together to tell the government about the changes they need in Ontario's employment laws.

The Rally for Decent Work was followed with a Queen's Park lobby day, where more than 100 labour activists and community members carried the message of employment law reform to more than 60 MPPs.

With the continuation of the Changing Workplaces Review, the labour movement must remain vigilant and continue to educate, inform, tell our stories and push strongly for change. We can and we will build a labour movement that stands united to make sure that the workers of this province get the change they need.

The OFL continues its solidarity work. We applaud the creation of an Anti-Racism Directorate in the province – but we also expect this body to have real power to help combat racism in our communities and workplaces. OFL continues to advocate for legislation to combat domestic violence and the gender wage gap.

Over the course of the summer, I have met with workers across this province and talked with them about the issues that matter to them. I continue to believe the way to succeed in bettering the lives of Ontarians is through a united labour movement, and I encourage all locals to affiliate with their labour councils and the Ontario Federation of Labour. Together we can be bolder, courageous, and stand strong to get the change that Ontario workers need.

I call on each and every one of you to continue to work with us. Together, we'll raise the standards for all Ontario workers.

In solidarity,

Chris Buckley,
President of the Ontario Federation of Labour

Sign up for the OFL's new e-blast updates by texting the word "OFL" to 647-496-5602



Follow & Retweet the OFL on Twitter at:
[@OFLabour](https://twitter.com/OFLabour) and [@ChrisBuckleyOFL](https://twitter.com/ChrisBuckleyOFL)

THOUSANDS RALLY FOR DECENT WORK

It was a rainy day, but we all know that the labour movement is not made of sugar, and it wasn't going to melt away.

In fact, thousands of rally-goers joined in at Queen's Park to show their support for a wide range of changes to Ontario's out-dated employment laws from paid sick days for all workers, to making it easier to join a union, put an end to contract flipping, and equal pay for temp workers.

"I know I will continue to advocate to my last breath for change," said Marjorie Knight, an organizer with Fight for \$15 and Fairness. "Real change is to be made in the way workers are treated. We need \$15 an hour. We need paid sick days. And we need, all of us, to be under the law and treated fairly."

The rally was covered by CBC online and radio, Radio-Canada, CTV, CP24, World At Six, Global News, and The Sun.

Community partners The Fight for \$15 and Fairness staged an event at the intersection of College and University before joining the crowd in front of Queen's Park.

The family-friendly event featured face painting for the kids, and speakers were union and community members who could share their lived experience of the employment laws that need to be changed. Music was provided by the Socialist Hip-Hop artist Mohammad Ali, Slim Pickets and the Union Cards, Rambunctious, and Ngoma.



"I know I will continue to advocate until my dying breath for change, positive change. We need \$15 an hour. We need paid sick days and we need, all of us, to be under the law and treated fairly."

***- Marjorie Knight,
Fight for \$15 and Fairness***



"My experience as a worker has made me strongly appreciate the value that my union has, and why being in a union is so needed."

***- Tim Lum,
endured a 22-month strike at Wing's
Food Products
UFCW Local 175***



RALLY PHOTOS: ROSE HA



“All construction workers should have all their rights. Doesn’t matter their status, doesn’t matter if we are unionized or not.”

***- Erendira Bravo,
Construction Worker***



“We clearly need to make it fair. We need card-check. Signing a card should be enough to have our union. We need to make it fair.”

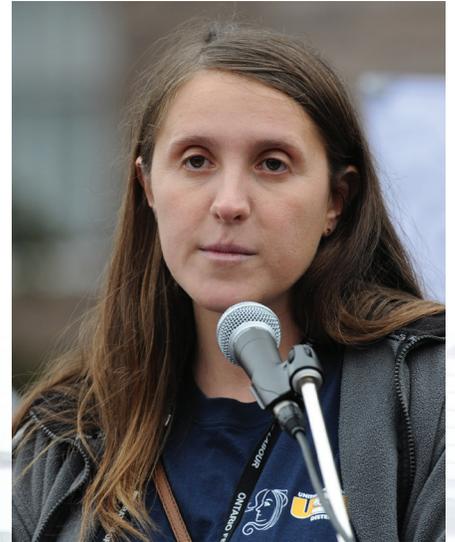
***- Suleman Basharat,
Trump Hotel worker,
Unite Here Local 75***

WORKERS' VOICES FROM THE RALLY FOR DECENT WORK



“Anyone who works a 40 hour workweek should make enough money to support their family.”

***- Ted Hext,
Ontario Federation of
Union Retirees (OFUR)***



“At any time my employer can lose the contract and I will lose my union by virtue of contract flipping.”

***- Jana Papuckoski,
Security Guard,
USW Local 5296***



“We need to go out there and talk to precarious workers, sign up precarious workers and welcome them into the House of Labour.”

***Marilou Martin,
OPSEU CAAT, President of
OPSEU Local 557***



“Why shouldn't retail and grocery store workers have decent working conditions?”

***- Deb Henry,
Grocery store worker,
Unifor Local 414***



“Our part-time workers are forced to go to work sick because they can't afford to lose hours. This is unhealthy for ourselves, our co-workers, and the public that we serve.”

***- Laura Kaminker,
Mississauga Library Workers
CUPE Local 1989***

LOBBYING TO MAKE IT FAIR

From across the province of Ontario, they came, gathering at Queen's Park. The goal? Improving working conditions for all Ontarians. These activists came to Toronto to make it fair.

In cooperation with affiliates, the OFL brought more than 100 labour and community activists from across the province to lobby MPPs directly.

On October 4, those activists came together for lobby training. OFL Officers were there to discuss the issues and OFL Assistant to the Officers Shannon Devine, OFL Campaign Organizer Melisa Bayon and long-time politician and advocate Olivia Chow led the group through the lobby process.

The morning of October 5, they were ready, and the meetings began.

Lobbyists spent a day at Queen's Park, where they held over 60 meetings with MPPs, taking the opportunity to discuss four categories of changes as they relate to the MPPs' riding:

- Fairness for Vulnerable Workers;
- Protecting the rights of Ontario Workers;
- Making it easier to join and keep a union; and
- Equal Rights for all Workers.



Jerry Jarosz (IAM), and Amandeep Buttar lobbied and MPP Jagmeet Singh to Make It Fair.

“We talked with MPP Han Dong about the need for legislated paid sick days, the situation of workers for contractors with employers, and exceptions to the Employment Standards Act.”

“We talked with MPP Han Dong about the need for legislated paid sick days, the situation of workers for contractors with employers, and exceptions to the *Employment Standards Act*,” said OPSEU Local 575 President Kingsley Kwok. “He was concerned about wage theft, wanted poverty reduction, and asked about minimum wages for liquor servers.”

Launched in the spring of 2016, the Make It Fair campaign is a grassroots effort that aims to change employment law in Ontario. Through work with 16 local organizing hubs and collaboration with community partners Fight for \$15 and Fairness.

Activists across the province continue the work of making their demands heard by politicians, the public, friends and family. Together, we are going to make it fair.



Brandon Haynes (CUPE), Jonathan Lobo (UFCW) and Laura MacLure (CUPE) lobbying Hon Marie-France Lalonde, Minister of Government and Community Services and Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones, pushing for employment laws that protect everybody.



PUTTING OUR HEADS TOGETHER

For the Ontario Federation of Labour to work well, it is necessary for all of us to come to the table.

In September, heads of Ontario unions, community partners and researchers came together for discussions and planning with regard to our response to Changing Workplaces Review, which will make recommendations on how to update our out-dated employment laws.

With employer campaigns visible on the horizon, the labour movement is coming together through the OFL to set the agenda for change in the province.

The meeting heard presentations on broad-based bargaining from Steven Barrett of Goldblatt Partners, and an overview of the *Employment Standards Act* (ESA) component from Mary Gellatly of Parkdale Community Legal Services.

Delegates heard presentations from Make It Fair organizer Melisa Bayon, as well as an examination of the sections of the Changing Workplaces Review focused on the *Labour Relations Act* (LRA), by OFL Director of Research and Education Thevaki Thevaratnam and

Executive Director of Prevention Link Rob Halpin.

“The portions of the review that affect the *Labour Relations Act* will have a powerful effect

“We wanted to take this opportunity to discuss strategy, exactly how the labour movement can put a maximum amount of pressure on this government to make sure that Ontarians have good jobs.”

on whether the labour movement can continue to protect workers’ rights,” said Thevaratnam.

Evident from these presentations, was the fact that the labour movement faces the task of ensuring that the changes are positive for working people.

Labour leaders are well aware that the rise of precarious work throws many Ontario workers into untenable employment situations. Part-time,

contract, and temporary work are becoming the norm.

The leaders in the room were clear: the labour movement can set a standard that will improve conditions for Ontario’s most vulnerable workers, and ensure that other workers are protected. To do that, workers must be able to easily join and keep a union.

“The labour movement must come together on this issue,” said OFL President Chris Buckley. “We wanted to take this opportunity to discuss strategy, exactly how the labour movement can put a maximum amount of pressure on this government to make sure that Ontarians have good jobs.”

The OFL has also brought together a large network of union, community researchers and policy analysts, which has met twice in preparation for our responses to the Changing Workplaces Review Interim Report, due on October 14.

The OFL looks forward to further collaboration with its affiliates as the Changing Workplaces Review continues.

FUND USW JOB ACTION CENTRES



Chris Buckley addresses the crowd protesting the defunding of USW job action centres.

The OFL stood in solidarity with the United Steelworkers and allies, gathering in front of the Ontario Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development to call on the government to restore funding for two job action centres.

“Our government needs to support these workers, not take away funding from a service that’s going to get them through one of the most difficult times in their lives.”

The job action centres provide services that help laid off workers get back on their feet.

“We know that losing your job is right up there in causing stress with things like the death of a loved one,” said OFL President Chris Buckley, addressing the crowd. “Our government needs to support these workers, not take away funding from a service that’s going to get them through one of the most difficult times in their lives.”

The job action centres that are being defunded by the government have been operating since 2003. We call on the government to refund these job action centres, which are essential to the laid off workers of Toronto and Peel region.

CALLING FOR CHANGE TO PERSONAL EMERGENCY LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

OFL CALLS ON GOVERNMENT TO EXTEND PERSONAL EMERGENCY LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS TO ALL WORKERS WITHOUT EXEMPTIONS

The Changing Workplaces Review Special Advisors called for submissions on Personal Emergency Leave (PEL) at the end of August, separate from the deadline for submissions on the other sections of the Changing Workplaces Review.

The separate date for submissions on PEL was sparked by concerns raised by business about the application of emergency leave provisions in the *Employment Standards Act*.

While the separation of the PEL from the rest of the changing workplaces review defeats the purpose of an overall review, the OFL was quick to respond with the recommendation that all employees have access to Personal Emergency Leave with no exceptions.

More than 1.7 million Ontario workers are ineligible for Personal Emergency Leave simply because they are employed at a firm with 49 or fewer employees.

“We know that Personal Emergency Leave is

essential for workers and everyone should be able to take time off when it is needed,” said OFL President Chris Buckley.

Ontario is the only jurisdiction in Canada to penalize employees on this issue based on business size.

Regardless of the nature of employment or business size, no one is exempt from a personal emergency. The OFL continues to advocate that the exemption based on business size be repealed which would extend PEL coverage to more than 20 per cent of Ontario's workforce.

If some employers are allowed to opt out, the purpose of the *Employment Standards Act* is undermined. The Act is meant to establish the minimum standards for decent work in the province.

The OFL strongly believes that PEL should not be reduced in scope nor should any future amendments enable employers to opt out of PEL or any other employment standards.

PRECARIOUS WORK SURVEY

Low-wage, contract, temporary work is becoming more and more common in Ontario. The rapid growth of this precarious work is one of the reasons that unions need to ensure that worker needs are considered as the government reviews its employment laws.

The Make It Fair campaign is advocating for changes that will improve conditions for all workers in Ontario. It also aims to gain a better understanding of what precarious work means for Ontarians.

To that end, the campaign launched a survey about precarious work and asked workers across the province to describe their experience of precarious work and what it has meant for them.

The closing date of the survey has been extended to **October 31, 2016**.

“The survey is a very useful tool for starting conversations about precarious work and talking about our experiences,” said Make It Fair Campaign Organizer Melisa Bayon.

You can find the survey online at makeitfair.ca/precarious_work_survey.

ADVOCATING FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY: WRITING THE WORKERS BACK IN

In 1999, the WSIB reported 1,476 lost-time injury claims as a result of workplace violence. In 2009, almost 2,100 workers were injured as a result of violence. In 2015, that number hit an all-time high of 2,350. Our members tell us that things are getting worse in the workplace.

In order to provide workers with access to information about preventing workplace violence and harassment, the OFL distributed a new booklet *Health and Safety Representation: Writing the Workers Back In*. This booklet provides the tools activists need to ensure that health and safety standards are observed and enforced in their workplaces.

The booklet is produced by Labour OHCOW Academic Research Collaboration (LOARC), an association of worker health and safety representatives and researchers. This new resource offers advice on the types of approaches

that can help health and safety activists have the most impact in their workplaces. It is produced in a template format so unions can add their own logo and insert a page with a message to their members.

The guidance is based on research and experience of activists and was prepared by occupational health and safety specialists from unions, academia, the Workers Health & Safety Centre (WHSC), and the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW).

Applying standards of health and safety can be challenging, and this booklet provides easy-to-use steps and best practices such as “Ten Operating Principles for Guiding Effective Participation.”

“This booklet fills a gap that many of our activists noted, and we hope that by providing a tool like this we can help workers engineer significant improvements in their workplaces,” said OFL

Director of Occupational Health and Safety Vern Edwards. “The law is a minimum standard, and it is important that the labour movement continue to push for better conditions.”

The OFL and its affiliates continue to push the highest levels of government for better enforcement of existing laws, more accountability for non-compliant employers, and even better legislation. When workers are killed, we call on the police to investigate the employer to determine if criminal negligence was the cause of the death.

It has taken decades to get the legislation we have today. The prevention booklet is one more step on the road toward safe and healthy workplaces for all workers.

For more information or to obtain a copy of the booklet email vedwards@ofl.ca.

CONFERENCE
VIOLENCE & HARASSMENT
IN THE WORKPLACE

NEW RIGHTS, NEW CHALLENGES
 OCTOBER 6, 2016 – 9:00 AM TO 4:00 PM, TORONTO, ON



OFL CONFERENCE TAKES ON NEW LAWS GOVERNING WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

Thanks to the work of the labour movement, harassment and violence in the workplace are now recognized as issues of health and safety, human rights and criminal law. Public awareness of harassment and violence in the workplace also continues to increase.

The Ontario Government recently passed Bill 132, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to sexual violence, sexual harassment, domestic violence and related matters. Bill 132 amended various existing statutes with respect to sexual violence, sexual harassment, and domestic violence. The important changes are amendments to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHS)*, which come into force on September 8, 2016.

To ensure that labour and community activists have the skills they need in time for the September implementation of Bill 132, the

Ontario Federation of Labour held a conference: *New Rights, New Challenges: Violence and Harassment in the Workplace*.

Approximately 250 delegates gathered at the conference to examine the changes and exchange skills and discuss possibilities for reform.

Lawyer and longtime workers' rights advocate Susan Ursel and associate lawyer Saneliso Moyo presented a practical overview of the changes to Bill 132. The CLC Ontario Director Erin Harrison spoke on how violence at home affects the workplace. A panel on violence prevention strategies and initiative followed, with panellists Pearl Sawyer (UFCW), Valence Young (ETFO), Susan Houston (Unifor), and Terri Aversa (OPSEU). The event was mc'ed by OFL Vice-President Ahmad Gaied, the Officer overseeing health and safety at the Federation.

"It has taken us decades to convince the Ontario government that violence and harassment in the workplace is a serious issue, a serious hazard," said OFL President Chris Buckley, who spoke during the conference opening.

"This conference was of particular interest to union leaders, staff reps, women and equity activists, and health and safety advocates," said OFL Human Rights and Women's Director Carrol Anne Sceviour. "Without taking time to build the skills activists need in the workplace to support anti-harassment programs and face the challenges that come to a workplace when there are problems with harassment, we can't expect workers to know how the changes to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* can work for them."



Photo: Shannon Devine

250 labour activists and community members attended the OFL Conference examining laws around workplace harassment.



SUPPORTING WORKPLACE LEAVE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS

Spousal violence has been consistently identified as one of the most common forms of violence against women in Canada and has physical, social and economic impacts for victims, their families and society.

NDP Women's Issues critic MPP Peggy Stattler put forward a bill to make an amendment to the *Employment Standards Act*, and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) which would allow an employee to take a leave of absence if they

have experienced domestic or sexual violence, and increase workplace awareness of issues around domestic violence through training.

Patty Coates, Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) Secretary-Treasurer, expressed the OFL's strong support for the *Domestic and Sexual Violence Workplace Leave, Accommodation and Training Act, 2016*.

"Women escaping domestic violence, who fear for their or their family's safety should not

have to worry about losing their jobs if they need to attend court or access community support. Access to domestic violence leave will open avenues to safety for a great many Ontarians."

The Bill would ensure that survivors of domestic violence 10 days paid leave to find childcare, attend medical appointments or find new accommodations. Employers would also be required to provide training on Domestic Violence prevention.

SUPPORTING THE STRIKING LIBRARIANS OF ESSEX COUNTY

Essex County Library workers have been on strike for more than 100 days as this Action Report goes to print. The issue is sick days for part-timers.

In September, OFL President Chris Buckley visited the picket line and spoke to the workers from CUPE 2974, bringing solidarity from the Federation of Labour. OFL Executive Vice-President Ahmad Gaied also visited the picket-line in August.

Paid sick days are needed for all Ontarians and are one of the demands of the Make It Fair campaign.

Mississauga library workers also went on strike this summer and were able to reach an agreement with their employer. OFL congratulates them on their agreement, and sends solidarity to the Essex County Library workers, who are still on the picket line fighting for their rights.



OFL President Chris Buckley speaks to Essex County Library Workers. As of this printing, they have been on strike for more than 100 days.

NEW FACES BUILDING THE OFL

For any outreach program to succeed, communications is key. So when the OFL succeeded in obtaining funding for Prevention Link, a relaunch of its well-known ODRT program, **Ogho Ikhalo** stepped in to fill the communications role. Ogho's experience in issues management and social media strategy will be key elements of the success of Prevention Link. Ogho brings more than ten years of experience in communications for government, international non-profit organizations and in the private sector to the OFL.



"Working with the OFL, it is rewarding to realize that safe and healthy workplaces exist and that social justice is alive and well."

Ogho Ikhalo can be reached at: oikhalo@preventionlink.ca

Meagan Perry is the Director of Communications at the OFL.

Throughout her work in communications and journalism, Perry has focused on progressive organizations, from producing stories about activism at the CBC to communications work at the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) and with non-profits in Yukon, NWT and Nunavut.



Meagan started her career in community media before moving to current affairs at CBC radio where she directed and produced for *As It Happens* and *Definitely Not the Opera*. In 2005 Perry made the leap to online media, joining on at *rabble.ca*, where she became the executive producer of Canada's first curated podcast network, and then editor-in-chief for the site. She developed *rabble.ca*'s journalistic policy and collaborated in the development of *rabble.ca*'s paid internship for labour reporting. Perry founded a podcast production consultancy in 2007 and has produced multimedia communications productions, content and strategy for non-profit, government, and labour clients across Canada.

"The work that the OFL does is essential to quality of life for

Ontarians and I'm very glad to be part of making sure workers rights are respected, expanded, and well-known," said Perry. "I'm looking forward to spreading the word about the OFL's work."

Meagan Perry can be reached at: mperry@ofl.ca



Renata Pucek is the new Secretary/Bookkeeper at OFL after 16 years working in finance for non-profit organizations.

"The work we do in bookkeeping will keep the OFL strong in the future," said Pucek. "I'm looking forward to using my skills to support the progressive work that the OFL does."

"I am very pleased to welcome Renata to the team at the OFL," said Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates. "Bookkeeping is central to

the smooth functioning of all organizations and I'm looking forward to what we can accomplish together."

Renata Pucek can be reached at: rpucek@ofl.ca

Research and education at the OFL is the backbone of the OFL's advocacy work. When former Director of Research and Education Rob Halpin moved to the Prevention Link program, **Thevaki Thevaratnam** was hired to take on this important role.

Thevaratnam comes to the OFL from the Ontario New Democratic Party, where she served as Finance and Economic Researcher. At the OFL, she is responsible for research and education on a number of issues related to industrial relations policy (e.g., the



Changing Workplaces Review) and pension policy.

"I'm looking forward to providing activists with the tools and information they need for them to push for social change," said Thevaratnam.

Thevaratnam has also worked for the Ministry of Finance, Industry Canada, and Ontario Lottery and Gaming. She holds a Masters Degree in Public Policy from the University of Toronto.

Thevaki Thevaratnam can be reached at: tthevaratnam@ofl.ca

NEW LOOK, SAME QUALITY SERVICE!

A beloved program is back in the fold at the Ontario Federation of Labour.

Prevention Link is now Ontario's only comprehensive and holistic disability prevention program. It builds on the 25-year success of its predecessor, Occupational Disability Response Team (ODRT).

Its return will help workers return to work following injury, and guide workplaces on how to prevent injuries from occurring.

The rebirth of the program offers an opportunity for the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) to continue its mission of improving working conditions for anyone at work, or returning to work after an injury.

Prevention Link, now funded by the Ontario Ministry of Labour's Prevention Office and administered by the OFL, will continue the work of the ODRT. Its programs will provide quality training, mentoring, outreach and advisory services for unionized and non-unionized workers, workplace representatives, and employers.

"The labour movement made it clear to us that the services provided by the former ODRT were crucial to ensuring safe and healthy workplaces for all workers," said OFL President Chris Buckley. "Obtaining funding for Prevention Link has been one of the priorities at the OFL and I'm very pleased to see us continuing to offer a workplace disability prevention program."

"It is a thrill to reinvigorate a respected program that has trained more than 15,000 workplace-based representatives to better understand the nature and causes of workplace injuries. The Prevention Link program will help improve the culture of safety in their workplaces across Ontario," said Rob Halpin, Executive Director of Prevention Link.

Prevention Link addresses two categories of prevention, primary and secondary. Primary prevention work focuses on reducing exposure to hazards that cause illness, disease or injury, while secondary prevention reduces the impact of an injury that has already occurred.

"Prevention Link is a labour of love," said Halpin. "Everyone involved in this program is deeply committed to improving the well-being of Ontario's most vulnerable workers."

Halpin said that the Prevention Link program will place increased emphasis on the links between primary and secondary prevention of occupational injury. Illness and disease in workplaces throughout the province.

The Prevention Link disability prevention program has three distinct areas of focus:

Occupational Disability Response Training: this branch of the new program enables workers to apply their skills, and problem solve on primary and secondary prevention initiatives in their workplaces, and in their communities.

Return to Work: This is the consulting branch of Prevention Link. It facilitates a strategic fit with workplace return-to-work best practices and all applicable rights, health and safety, accessibility and

worker's compensation legislation.

The Lighthouse Initiative: This initiative will serve two categories of vulnerable workers – those returning to work after an injury and those who may not have been injured but who have limited knowledge of occupational health and safety laws and the available resources.

"Prevention Link is a labour of love," said Halpin. "Everyone involved in this program is deeply committed to improving the well-being of Ontario's most vulnerable workers."

For more information, visit preventionlink.ca.

THE OFL TEAM

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE OFFICERS:

Shannon Devine, Executive Assistant

OFL & PREVENTION LINK DIRECTORS

Melisa Bayon, Campaign Organizer

Lucas Costello, Lobby Organizer

Meagan Perry, Communications Director

Vern Edwards, Health & Safety Director

Rob Halpin, Executive Director, Prevention Link

Laurie Hardwick, Organization Services Director

Ogho Ikhlo, Senior Communications and Outreach Specialist

Jane Liu, Controller

Carrol Anne Sceviour, Human Rights and Women's Director

Thevaki Thevaratnam, Director of Research and Education

OFL & PREVENTION LINK STAFF

Judy Chow, Executive Secretary (Secretary-Treasurer & Administration)

Paulette Hazel, Secretary

Brian Morgan, Production Coordinator

Kathy Neumann, Executive Secretary (President, Exec. V.P. and Exec. Assistant)

Renata Pucek, Bookkeeper

Ethiraju Ramachandar, Administrator

Sylvia Stewart, Secretary

Sue Fratric, Secretary, Prevention Link

WE HEART POSTIES

Throughout the summer, CUPW members faced threats of a lockout from their employer Canada Post.

After a number of extensions and pauses in bargaining, CUPW reached a tentative agreement with Canada Post on August 30.

We stand in solidarity with CUPW, and congratulate them on the agreement they managed to negotiate with Canada Post. Ratification votes will be held between October 23 and December 3 in locals across the country.



OFL EXTENDS ITS REACH WITH TORSTARS INSERT: THE NEW LABOUR STANDARD

The Make It Fair campaign was featured in a Labour Day insert in the Toronto Star. The OFL's contribution to the 8-page labour insert included an overview of the Make It Fair campaign and a report on how OFL recommendations were adopted in changes to Bill 132, giving employees an opportunity to define how harassment is handled in their workplaces.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICIES IN THE WORKPLACE: EMPLOYEES NEED A SAY

Sexual harassment exists in all sectors of Ontario's workforce. It is notoriously difficult to prove or prosecute. The majority of workers who experience sexual harassment are women, with one in ten reporting harassment at work in a 2015 Ipsos-Reid poll.

Over the years there have been many cases that have underscored the need for employers to take action on sexual harassment in the workplace. In 1996 Theresa Vince was killed by her manager at the Sears store where she worked, after years of harassment by a manager. Likewise, in 2005 Lori Dupont was killed by her boyfriend who was also a colleague at the hospital where she worked. There are many other cases.

The Ontario Federation of Labour is committed to fighting to eliminate sexism, violence against women, and gender-based discrimination. So when the Government of Ontario launched Bill 132 *"It's Never Ok: An Act to end Sexual Violence and Harassment"* the OFL made sure it was there to advocate for Ontario's workers.

"Women are disproportionately affected by harassment and sexual assault in the workplace," said Barb MacQuarrie, Community Director for the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children at Western University. "The labour movement needs to continue its work of standing up for the rights of workers – sending a strong message that harassment and violence are not acceptable: not at home, not at school, not at work, not anywhere."

Bill 132 is an act that amends various

statutes with respect to sexual violence, sexual harassment, domestic violence and related matters.

The OFL recognized that Bill 132, which made changes to a number of laws including the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* that sets out regulations for employer-developed policies around preventing sexual harassment, needed to include an opportunity for workers to contribute to workplace policies.

"The fact is that if the workers aren't safe from harassment then no one in those workplaces is safe, whether it's a healthcare facility, a university or an auto plant."

***- OFL Secretary-Treasurer
Patty Coates***

Under The *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, employers can decide for themselves how to bring their workplace into compliance with the Act, including how they will prevent harassment in the workplace and their policies if harassment occurs. While guidelines and a code exist for employers, they are not required to meet them, as long as their own policies comply with the law.

To create safe workplaces, it is essential that workers have a voice, and the OFL noted that

there was no provision in the Act for employees to have an opportunity to voice their concerns and suggest policy changes during the development of employer policies around sexual harassment.

"We want to ensure that every worker has a safe workplace," said OFL Secretary-Treasurer Patty Coates. "The fact is that if the workers aren't safe from harassment then no one in those workplaces is safe, whether it's a healthcare facility, a university or an auto plant. Workers need a say in the way their workplace handles sexual harassment," she added.

OFL presented to committee, suggesting an addition to Bill 132 that would address workers' concerns. The language was included in amendments to the Bill, with this amendment to Bill 132:

(1) An employer shall, in consultation with the committee or a health and safety representative, if any, develop and maintain a written program to implement the policy with respect to workplace harassment required under clause 32.0.1 (1) (b)

It is the workers who know best the challenges they face in their workplace. It is essential that workers have a voice when it comes to developing policies around sexual harassment and assault prevention at work.

Thanks to this change in Bill 132, workers can advocate for policies that better reflect the concerns they have in the workplace, that give them the confidence they need to stand up for themselves if they are being harassed, and to create equitable workplaces.

TALKING IMMIGRATION WITH THE SWEDES



Canada is known for its diversity but as any activist knows, creating space for diversity is an ongoing process in most spaces.

An all-party Committee on the Labour Market from Sweden requested a meeting with representatives of the Ontario labour movement to talk about best practices when it comes to helping refugees and immigrants establish themselves in a new country. The meeting was coordinated by the OFL.

While Canada hosts a large number of labour immigrants, the majority of immigrants to Sweden are refugees.

The OFL invited all affiliates to the meeting to discuss some of the practices that are most effective in helping newcomers settle into jobs and lives in a new country.

OFL Vice-President Ahmad Gaied chaired the meeting, speaking frankly about the challenges faced by newcomers entering the labour market.

“The meeting was very productive, and I was inspired by the level of interest from the Committee.”

- OFL Vice-President Ahmad Gaied

“Discussing the ways the labour movement engages with newcomers to Canada is a great opportunity to share skills and knowledge,” said Gaied. “The meeting was very productive, and I was inspired by the level of interest from the Committee.”

The meeting provided a space to discuss the challenges, strategies and successes that arise from that work.

The discussion was wide ranging, from the challenges of reaching out to people who may believe that involvement in a union could put their lives in jeopardy, to ensuring that workers know their rights in the workplace.

SPEAK OUT AT ONTARIO'S ANTI-RACISM CONSULTATIONS

In February OFL applauded the creation of an Anti-Racism Directorate. The creation of that body was only the first step.

The Ontario government has launched community meetings to hear from the public and organizations on addressing systemic racism and eliminating barriers for Indigenous and racialized communities.

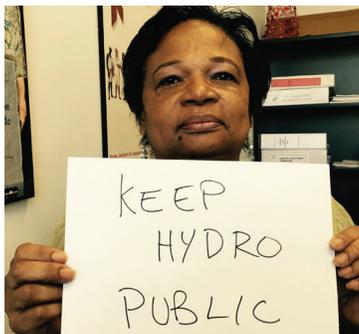
Michael Coteau, Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism, will host nine public community meetings to hear from Ontarians about how to address systemic racism and implement meaningful change.

“It is very important that labour and community groups make it very clear to the government that we want this directorate to be an effective tool in fighting systemic racism across this province,” said OFL Vice-President Ahmad Gaied, who also attended a forum on racism put on by the City of London in September.

We urge unions across Ontario to participate in the Anti-Racism Directorate public hearings that are being held across the province.

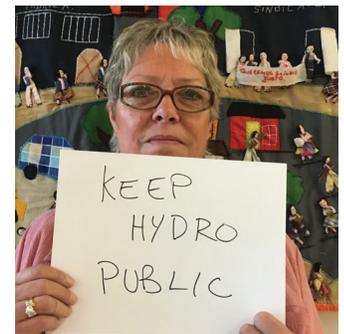
Future consultations are scheduled for the cities of London, Sudbury, Kitchener-Waterloo and Thunder Bay. For more information about locations and times, go to: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/anti-racism-directorate>

For a briefing note that includes a backgrounder, consultation locations and OFL asks, visit [OFL.ca](https://www.ontario.ca)



TWEET UP!

Sometimes you want to be trendy, and you want to Keep Hydro Public. Maybe it's also the day of the Throne Speech. All three of those things were true on the day the OFL participated in a tweet up to remind Kathleen Wynne that we want her to Keep Hydro Public. OFL tweeted staff photos with the “Keep Hydro Public” message, and hashtags #KeepHydroPublic, #HydroNot4Sale, and #MyHydroOne. We hope our voice was heard loud and clear.



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