



14th Biennial Convention // 2017

**ONTARIO FEDERATION
OF LABOUR
COMMITTEE
REPORTS**

2017



OFL COMMITTEE REPORTS

**ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR CONVENTION
NOVEMBER 20–24, 2017**



// OFL OFFICERS



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

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2017

14th Biennial Convention

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR COMMITTEE REPORTS

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WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

The Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) Women's Committee works with grassroots women's groups, community coalitions and other trade union committees dedicated to social and economic equality and the advancement of equality for women. To gain equality and achieve their goals, women must work with, as well as through, their unions. History demonstrates that by organizing into unions, working people have achieved better wages, better working conditions, benefits and job security.

Over the past two years, our work has gone beyond the issue of women's representation in the union to include the struggles of women for economic security and decent work. We acknowledged the unique needs and experiences of diverse women including lesbians, transgender women, women with disabilities, women of colour and Aboriginal women.

Our sisters show incredible resiliency, creativity and strength to confront the myriad of issues facing their members in the workplace while balancing their community activism and family lives.

Women's equality must be addressed within the labour movement. The labour movement as an organization must be seen as open, transparent and accessible to the diversity of all its membership. The OFL has a history of implementing structural changes to better address the changing needs of its members.

CAMPAIGN INITIATIVES

Developing leadership

In March 2017, over 200 women, union and community leaders came together for the 3rd OFL Women's Leadership Summit. Under the banner "Sister to Sister," women activists shared skills, strategies and experiences in working together to challenge inequality. The Summit focused on the need to build stronger unions, ensure diversity within the leadership and strengthen partnerships with community allies in the struggle for a more just and equitable society.

Strategies and an action plan were developed to address the gains and concerns of women. This built on the ongoing work of activists through OFL committees, convention resolutions and work in and with community organizations.

The Committee holds its annual spring strategic planning session each year to develop its work plan. Sisters from the OFL Executive Board and Council and community leadership are invited to participate in the sessions. This broader range of leadership voice and vision provides a more diverse coming together and identifies positive changes and actions.

Women's march on Washington/Ontario

The Women's March on Washington and sister marches worldwide were a powerful reminder that racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic and ableist statements made by U.S. President Donald Trump in the lead up to his election will not be tolerated.

The OFL Women's Committee was proud to participate in the action both in Washington and in Toronto, where OFL staff worked as members of the organizing committee and marshaled the protest. "60,000 women and allies came out to this inclusive march to show their solidarity with each other." Committee members also participated in Niagara, Ottawa, Kingston and London marches.

March 8 Project: International Women's Day

The Federation's March 8 Project was developed to build solidarity, pride and celebrate union women. Our 2016 and 2017 themes were "Sisters, Solidarity and Strength" and "Celebrating Sisterhood and Solidarity." All surplus from the sale of the pins are donated to provincial women's organizations.

2016-2017 donations went to the following organizations:

- Equal Pay Coalition's Equal Pay Day Campaign
- CBTU Summer Youth Program: OFL sponsored 5 girls to attend
- OCBCC - Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day
- Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre
- Ontario Native Women's Association
- Co-sponsor launch of Rise Up! A Women's History Digitizing Project
- Pay Equity Supreme Court Challenge

March 8 is marked every year as International Women's Day (IWD) to celebrate and assess equality gains. We remember Bread and Roses and women in the struggles before us to make a better world for our daughters and other loved ones. The Committee will continue to produce our popular March 8 Project poster and pins. We will participate in IWD events around the province including marches, festivals and annual community IWD breakfasts.

Activism in workplaces and communities

Women need and want to be part of the labour movement. In all the work we do, women workers know that a union card is both a pathway out of poverty and the road to building a just and equal society. Ontario's outdated employment and labour laws are a significant barrier to women's economic equality. Women mobilized for the Make It Fair and \$15 and Fairness Campaigns.

The Women's Committee members believe that a key role of the Committee is to assist with supporting and mobilizing women in OFL central campaigns such as rallies, strike support, labour law reform, building social justice movements.

CAMPAIGN INITIATIVES

The OFL Women's Committee continues to join in sisterhood with our affiliates and labour councils as well as community organizations and women's advocacy groups to tackle critical issues facing women in the home, workplace and society. Women's equality is a labour issue and the gains we have won are due to our integral work with community partners and the broader community. The OFL has a long history of working with the wider community on issues of mutual concern. Seeking opportunities to talk, listen and work together creates opportunities for positive change. This process must be ongoing.

Over the last two years, members have developed a number of labour and community campaigns.

Fighting for pay equity

Since the 2015 OFL Convention, the Committee continued to work with the Equal Pay Coalition and our affiliates to press for renewed awareness and stronger enforcement of pay equity legislation. The Equal Pay Day campaign focused on public awareness of women's economic rights under Ontario's *Pay Equity Act*. We developed an action toolkit for affiliates and labour councils. Through our affiliates and labour councils, we assisted in coordinating many actions across the province. Committee members participated in meetings of the Equal Pay Coalition and Premier Wynne, Minister of Labour and Minister Responsible for Women on the need for legislative enforcement, reform and a public education campaign. These actions led the government to establish a review and consultation process on "Closing the Gender Wage Gap" and forming a Working Group.

You can find the OFL Submission to the Ontario "Gender Wage Gap Strategy" (Jan. 2016) at OFL.ca/publications.

Committee members reached out to their affiliates to assist in funding the Equal Pay.

Coalition intervention in a Supreme Court of Canada Pay Equity case.

Ending violence against women

Eliminating Violence Against Women has been a key focus of our work. Working with other OFL Equity committees, we continue to build awareness of workers' rights on anti-harassment, violence and domestic violence under the *Occupational Health & Safety Act*.

OFL Submission on Bill 132 (Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment, Domestic Violence) (Jan. 2016).

OFL Conference: Violence in the Workplace New Rights, New Challenges

This ongoing mobilization of labour and community partners led to the Ontario government's creation of a Sexual Violence and Harassment Roundtable. Throughout late fall of 2016 and spring 2017, members mobilized for the inclusion of 10 Paid Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence leave in employment law.

Personal Emergency Leave Submission for the Changing Workplace Review (Aug 2016)

The Committee produced a “Domestic Violence Goes to Work Every Day: A Bargaining Guide (Nov 2016)”. Leading into December 6, we mobilized workplace and community actions.

The Committee actively supports and mobilizes community “Memorial Marches” to remember and honour missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls. A toolkit for actions was developed and distributed to affiliates and labour councils. The Committee also continued to mobilize in support of annual October 4 Aboriginal Women’s Vigils.

Take Back the Night

Take Back the Night marches are critical community events where union and community women join together to stand up and speak out on women and girls’ rights to be safe in their communities, their homes and their workplaces. Each year, committee members promote and support local events.

Recognizing women’s history month

October is Women’s History Month. Each year, the OFL Women’s Committee develops materials to recognize women’s historic contributions to the fight for equality and social justice. Members supported and promoted the launch of a digital archive of feminist activism in Canada from the 1970s to the 1990s Rise Up!

Fighting for child care

We have long acknowledged child care as a cornerstone to women’s equality and a key economic issue. Our work with the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care and our affiliates continues to demand a child care system that meets the needs of children, parents and child care workers. Our work includes fighting child care centre closures; supporting child care workers’ fight for pay equity.

Child care Worker & Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day

The OFL is a sponsor of Child Care Worker & Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day. In our struggle to create a child care system, we take time to recognize the dedication, commitment, hard work and education of Early Childhood Educators and all staff who work with young children. The day also calls attention to the fact that child care staff are underpaid and undervalued for their work and that Ontario families need more affordable, safe, licensed, high quality child care in order to support their families.

CONTINUING OUR WORK

A commitment to activism

In ever increasing numbers, women are taking on leadership for change. Young women and women of equity-seeking groups have brought innovative ideas and vitality to our movement.

Although there have been setbacks, women trade unionists can celebrate many victories and achievements in organizing at the bargaining table, in the workplace and in the labour movement overall.

The struggle for women's equality continues both inside and outside the labour movement. There is no doubt that the rise of an embolden "right" threatens each and every equality gain that we have made and any future movement forward.

As we use our activism within unions to advance women's equality, we cannot ignore the intersection between the struggle for women's equality and the fight for a more socially-just world - free of racism, ableism, ageism, homophobia, transphobia and poverty – where we create a just and equal society.

Our struggle continues and we must find ways to engage our members, our unions and our communities. We must deliver on our commitment to train, mentor, support, and inspire new leaders within both the labour and broader equality movement.

We will:

Continue to educate and mobilize for elimination of violence against women; through our Sisters in Spirit Vigils, building awareness of our health and safety rights to a violence-free workplace, mobilizing community Take Back the Night marches and December 6 events to mark the Montreal Massacre. We will continue our work with women's shelters to fight for funding to ensure women and children have a safe haven.

March 8, celebrate and assess equality gains. The Committee will continue to produce our popular March 8 Project poster and pins. We will participate in IWD events around the province including marches, festivals and annual community IWD breakfasts.

Women's economic equality work with our affiliates and the Equal Pay Coalition to press for enforcement of present legislation and needed reform to recognize that Ontario's wage gap is not only based on gender but race as well. We will work through provincial and local action to build awareness and promote Equal Pay Day.

Child care will be a priority. The OFL will continue to lobby both provincially and federally for a national, public child care system.

During Women's History Month in October, we will continue to highlight the "histories" of women's activism.

A union card is a pathway to decent wages, benefits, pensions and access to equality rights. Studies show that women and workers of colour want to sign a union card. The Committee is committed to continue working with the OFL Officers, Executive Board and Council and women's organizations to remove legislative barriers to join unions.

In both the 2018 provincial and municipal elections, the Committee will develop a mobilizing-the-vote toolkit highlighting issues critical to women and supporting women candidates that would implement an agenda of progressive change that would achieve full equality and participation in our society.

In the spring of 2018, the Committee will come together in our Strategic Session to develop a work plan that reflects the direction set by Convention 2017 delegates.

Organize the 4th OFL Women's Leadership Summit.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Gogi Bhandal, CLC
Debbie Carmichael, CUPW
Patty Clancy, COPE
Nancy Guzzo, LIUNA
Barbara Dobrowolski, OECTA
Cindy Dubue, OSSTF
Tracey Marshall, OSSTF
Heather Kelley, IAMAW
Lisa Kelly, Unifor
Linda Koenders, PSAC
Carmen Lint, ATU
Yolanda McClean, CUPE
Tracy Miller, The Society of Energy Professionals
Glacier Samuel, UFCW
Karen Pullen, IBEW
Candace Rennick, CUPE
Pearl Sawyer, UFCW
Tracy Simpson, USW District 6
Tricia Watt, TWU-USW
Maureen King, COPE 343
Carol Zavitz, ETFO,
Patty Coates, OFL Officer
Carrol Anne Sceviour, OFL staff

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HUMAN RIGHTS DEPARTMENT REPORT

We begin this report with a heartfelt thank you to OFL Administrative Staff Sylvia Stewart who has retired since our last convention. Sister Stewart's experience, knowledge and commitment to our work as an equity activist and OFL staff support have led the way to numerous equity gains.

The OFL Human Rights Department is composed of the Human Rights Committee, the Aboriginal Circle, the Workers of Colour Committee, the Persons with a Disability Committee and the Solidarity and Pride Committee. Together, the department has made community building a central priority, with a specific focus on the mandate and funding of the government's Anti-Racism Directorate, migrant workers, employment equity, youth, elimination of carding, poverty, minimum wage and the Make It Fair campaign.

The OFL Human Rights Department has acted on many of the recommendations and resolutions passed at the 2015 OFL Convention; the clear mandate from the 2015 Convention was supporting workers and their families in their communities and workplaces politically and socially. The resolutions and recommendations encompassed defending equity gains and building an inclusive society.

OFL Equity Committees submits reports, advises and makes recommendations on human rights and equity: labour, civil, cultural, economic, political and social issues from a thematic or province-specific perspective to the OFL Executive Board. With the support of the Human Rights Department, the committees undertake resolving issues and concerns of a broader, structural and sometimes systemic nature through collective discussion and resolve. It is followed up with recommendations to the OFL Executive Board. The Committee brings alleged human rights violations or abuses to the OFL's attention. They contribute to the development of human rights standards and policy for labour, and engages in advocacy, raises public awareness, and provides advice to the other OFL departmental committees or working groups through an equity lens.

One of our foundational mandates is to continue building strong secure relationships with our community allies around common issues and struggles. The plan of action incorporated a renewed commitment to putting human rights and equity issues at the centre of all OFL activism and mobilizations.

HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUITY COMMITTEE

The OFL Human Rights & Equity Committee meets annually in the OFL's Equity Strategic Planning Session. The session provided a space for OFL Equity Committees to join in open dialogue and strategic planning to carry forward actions as mandated by convention, and move an intersectional equality agenda forward.

The Committee has worked hard to build longstanding, sustainable and respectful relationships with equity-centered community organizations such as the Colour of Poverty-Colour of Change, the Urban Alliance, the African Canadian, South Asian and Asian Legal Clinics, the Canadian Arab Federation, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU), Asian Canadian Labour Alliance (ACLA) and LATUC have been very successful initiatives both for labour and the community.

There has been consistently equal participation in community and labour organization sponsored events like workshops, educational and community events.

Over the next term, the Committee will continue to work together to educate, advocate, lobby and develop training tools around austerity and other campaigns on equity and human rights, including specific issues that will dispel myths, build solidarity and eliminate barriers for all workers in Ontario.

The Committee will map out and initiate a focused lobby directed at the provincial government to re-enact employment equity legislation with clear guidelines, targets and enforcement policies.

The Committee will mount a campaign to lobby the provincial government to establish the Anti-Racism Secretariat outlined in the *Human Rights Code Amendment Act* as an entity to advance racial and social justice. The Committee will encourage this model of equity self-identification to be incorporated in all future OFL events, so that the findings can be documented and reported to the OFL Executive Board on a regular basis.

The Human Rights and Equity Committee organized the first OFL Equity and Justice Summit on November 17 & 18, 2017 at the Sheraton Centre Hotel, Toronto.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Anita Bryan, USW

Mohamad Alsadi, Unifor

Heather Kelley, IAMAW

Naveen Mehta, UFCW

Jackie Taylor, COPE

Sharon DeSousa, PSAC

John Odell, Unifor

Tricia Watt, USW

Katrina Wheaton, OECTA

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Lloyd Brown, PSAC

Wayne Milliner, OSSTF

Lynne Descary, USW

Mehdi Kouhestaninejad, CLC

Ahmad Gaied, OFL Officer

Carrol Anne Sceviour, OFL Staff

ABORIGINAL CIRCLE

The Ontario Federation of Labour and its affiliates recognize the urgent need to respect and promote the inherent human rights of Aboriginal peoples particularly the rights for their families and communities to retain shared responsibility for the upbringing, training, education, social and financial well being of their children and families.

Aboriginal, Métis and Inuit Peoples regionally, nationally and internationally have faced ongoing dispossession of their lands and resources. They are subject to repeated racism and discrimination and other human rights abuses. The OFL Vice-President representing Aboriginal peoples and the OFL Aboriginal Circle's mandate is to gather appointed Aboriginal, Métis and Inuit representatives together to address, lobby, advocate and politicize economical, social, cultural, political, civil, spiritual and environmental rights specific to the First Nations peoples here in Ontario. When necessary, the OFL Aboriginal Circle supports any national or global campaigns initiated by Aboriginal, Métis and Inuit people, the Canadian Labour Congress and community allies.

Through recommendations, actions and activism, the OFL Aboriginal Circle encourages the labour movement and the governments of Ontario and Canada to follow the guidelines outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples where cooperation with the First Nations people on the principles of justice, non-discrimination, equality, democracy and respect for human rights is critical and necessary. The OFL Aboriginal Circle will continue to be part of the following campaigns:

- Truth and Reconciliation
- Idle No More
- Grassy Narrows
- February 14 Women's Memorial March
- October 4 Sisters in Spirit Vigils
- Boiled Water Alerts
- June 21 as a Statutory Holiday called Provincial Day for Truth and Reconciliation in Ontario

The Circle has developed a Traditional Territory Acknowledgements in Ontario resources kit for affiliates. The Circle will continue to host meetings with affiliate and community Aboriginal Circles and committees to talk about a collective community/union action plan for the next term.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Alfonso D'Ambra, IAMAW

Don Bellerose, CUPE

Sheila Karasiewicz, PSAC

Cynthia Lilly, IUEC

Eddie Ste. Marie, CLC

Sharon Paris, CUPW

Glenn Wheeler, COPE

Wanda Power, USW

Joanne Webb, CUPE

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Michelle Riley, CUPW

Michelle Johnston, IFPTE

Rachel Mishenene, ETFO

Daniel M. Stevens, OSSTF

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WORKERS OF COLOUR

The OFL Workers of Colour Committee was formed to address the effect of racism, oppression, social injustice and other human rights violations. The space at the Committee allows representatives from affiliates to share and continuously acknowledge, recognize, confront and address pervasive racism at individual, workplace, systemic and institutional levels.

The Committee was responsible for acknowledging Black History Month by co-sponsoring events. Over 80 labour and community activists came together for African Heritage Month to engage in a community based discussion to help shape the political action work of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists Ontario Chapter, Ontario Federation of Labour and Canadian Labour Congress.

Committee members and federations officers actively supported Black Lives Matter demands for answers about shootings of Black men, as well as their call for broader systemic change.

Committee members working with communities to demand an end to the police practice of “carding” – the practice of routinely and randomly stopping citizens in the streets to obtain personal information which disproportionately affect young black men.

Committee members working with OFL Officers and Executive Board and Council mobilized actions condemning the rise in racist, Islamophobic, and xenophobic attacks in Canada and the United States - the murder of six worshippers at the Centre Culturel Islamique de Québec, vandalism of mosques and synagogues in Toronto and Montréal and the disruption of First Nations events in Halifax by a White supremacist group. Members worked with unions and community organizations mobilizing rallies for peace and inclusion, developing educationals, community forums and speaking out against hate. In recognition of March 21, 2016, Ontario’s labour movement encouraged unions and community members to download and display #StopHate window signs and to share them on social media.

Another key mobilization action was participation in the government’s consultation on establishing an Anti-Racism Directorate. Members participated in the community consultation. In March, the Ontario Federation of Labour partnered with Colour of Poverty-Colour of Change to produce an open letter to the Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism Michael Coteau. The letter was signed by community groups, academics, and non-profits committed to anti-racist work.

The Committee has worked hard to build longstanding, sustainable and respectful relationships with equity-centered community organizations like the Colour of Poverty-Colour of Change, the Urban Alliance, the African Canadian, South Asian and Asian Legal Clinics, the Canadian Arab Federation, CBTU, ACLA and LATUC have been very successful initiatives both for labour and the community.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Barrington Barnett, IMAW
Mehdi Kouestaninejad, CLC
Elizabeth Pecana, PSAC
Mohammad Alsadi, Unifor
Felicia Samuel, ETFO
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Gogi Bhandal, CLC
Ruth Pryce, Unifor
Gurmeet Dhillon, CUPW
Sonia Ellis Sequin, ETFO

Jackie Taylor, COPE
Tricia Watt, USW
Lloyd Brown, PSAC
Verline Howe, CUPE
Marie Clarke Walker, CLC
Mark Brown, CUPW
Megan Whitfield, CUPW
Carrol Anne Sceviour, OFL Staff
Ahmad Gaied, OFL Officer

PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY COMMITTEE

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) was passed in 2005. Its goal is to make Ontario accessible for people with disabilities by 2025. Ontario now has accessibility standards in five areas:

- customer service;
- employment;
- information and communications;
- transportation; and
- design of public spaces.

The OFL Persons with a Disability Committee's mandate is to work with affiliates and partners with like-minded community organizations like the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* to educate the broader labour movement on current disability issues and partner with community organizations who lobby the provincial government on behalf of the disabilities community.

The Committee worked with the OFL's Occupational Disability Support Program (ODRT) to develop the OFL Member & Community Service Policy which was in compliance with the Customer Service Standard developed under the AODA. The document was circulated to all affiliates and they were encouraged to develop similar policies for their organizations.

The Committee is working closely on all OFL events and campaigns to ensure they are accessible to all members. Early in 2016, the Committee met and made recommendations to the OFL Executive Board to ensure that the 2017 OFL Convention is the most accessible to date.

The members are kept informed of OFL activities such as rallies, conferences and educationals to ensure that the voices and concerns of injured workers and people with disabilities are heard, acknowledged and addressed.

The Committee will continue to work with the AODA Alliance to get a full update on how many organizations have filed mandatory Accessibility Reports under the AODA, as well as how many have been audited or inspected.

It is the Committee's top priority to create a fully accessible province where every Ontarian who lives or visits can fully participate economically, socially, and physically.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Adam Peer, ETFO

Terry Hall, COPE

Kim Kent, CLC

Michelle Konior, ETFO

Cindy Payen, Unifor

Steve Wanless, Unifor

Emily Wright, CUPE

Jessica Burnie, OSSTF

Marc Praill, UFCW

Niki Lunququist, Unifor

Souad Soubra, PSAC

Ahmad Gaied, OFL Officer

Laurie Hardwick, OFL Staff

SOLIDARITY & PRIDE COMMITTEE

The OFL Solidarity & Pride Committee has had an active two years. Members serve as a resource to both affiliates and community members on combating homophobia and transphobia in the workplace and our communities.

Coming out or being out at work can be challenging and, for many workers, dangerous. The Committee continues to build awareness of workers' rights on anti-harassment and violence under the *Occupational Health & Safety Act*. The Committee raises the issues of bullying and violence in our promotion of Pink Shirt Day held in April of each year. Throughout the year, the Committee highlights the issue of violence experienced by members of the trans community and marks November 25, National Day of Trans Remembrance.

On May 17, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, we stand in solidarity with our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members and with LGBTQI* communities around the world. The Committee has developed a poster and statements which are available to our affiliates and community partners.

There are LGBTQI* workers in every equity-seeking community. The OFL's Annual Equity Strategic Session provided a space for Solidarity & Pride Committee members to join in open dialogue and strategic planning to move an intersectional equality agenda forward.

A key legislative victory was passage of federal legislation Bill C-16 providing full legal rights for trans people under *Canada's Criminal Code and Human Rights Act*. The committee worked with the CLC, EGALE, NDP and other national groups for federal legislation for trans rights.

A key focus of our work is the co-ordination, mobilization and participation in Pride events such as parades, picnics and rallies which are scheduled across the province from May to September each year. The Committee develops pride event lists, educational materials and union-proud handouts for distribution.

2017 the Committee launched the first OFL Solidarity & Pride Champion Award. This new annual award acknowledges and celebrates individuals or groups who have made a significant or ongoing contribution to the advancement of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and two-spirit (LGBTQI*) human rights, equity and inclusion.

Through our membership in International Lesbian and Gay Association the Committee will continue to support the decriminalisation of sexual minorities in more than 70 UN member states. We will focus on mobilizing Ontario participation and visibility in both year-round community events and Pride week activities.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Tanya Liu, UFCW

Adam Peer, ETFO

Carolyn Egan, USW

Casey Oraa, COPE

Chandra-Li Paul, IATSE

Cheryl Fullerton, OECTA

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APPRENTICESHIP AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

This Committee meets on an as needed basis to deal with issues and entities such as the Ontario College of Trades (OCOT). The Committee was formed to address concerns regarding recommended changes to the *Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act*. The majority of concerns fell under three main issues:

- 1) The Classification of Trades.
- 2) The Role of the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB).
- 3) The Scopes of Practice.

CAMPAIGN INITIATIVES

The Committee met with the Minister of Labour, Kevin Flynn to discuss OFL concerns, and to seek assurances that OFL affiliates have raised regarding changes at the Ontario College of Trades (OCOT).

The Committee provided the Minister and his staff with a backgrounder that clarified the OFL's position and recapped the concerns of the OFL and affiliates:

During the meeting, the delegation highlighted the following:

Historical context from a provincial perspective, prior to the changes brought in by the Harris Government and the impact of that Government's changes on the existing *Trades Qualification and Apprenticeship Act* (TQAA).

By making structural changes to some Trades under the then TQAA it created the new *Apprenticeship Certification Act* (ACA).

A recap of highlights from the Armstrong Report and a discussion of how the implementation of the Armstrong Report and subsequent Whittaker Report has affected training and apprenticeships in Ontario.

The Whittaker Report was used to develop and implement the OCOT.

A general discussion on the Dean Report, and all of its challenges and flaws.

Through some general discussion, we identified that there were severe flaws in the Dean Report and we made it clear that our preference would be to remove the recommendations of the Dean Report, as they pertain to the Ontario College of Trades.

We noted that all functions pertaining to Apprenticeship and Trades in the Province of Ontario should be the responsibility of the OCOT. The Committee sought clarity from the Minister to establish just what role the Ministry of Labour will have in the day to day functioning of the OCOT.

Minister Flynn reiterated his appreciation of the work of OCOT, and he applauded the success they have had so far, considering all the road blocks they encountered from a variety of different groups.

The Minister:

- Agreed that the OCOT should elevate the Trades just the same as other professionals such as doctors, teachers and nurses etc.
- Stated he believed the OCOT was heading in the right direction.
- Indicated he has spoken to other jurisdictions who wished they had a model similar to that of the college of trades.
- Suggested he was aware of some problem areas. Areas such as poor enforcement that ultimately lead to the Dean Review/Report. Areas where the resolve for disputes should not be the Justice of the Peace or the Court system, but preferably the Ontario Labour Relations Board.

On the Classification of Trades:

The Minister felt that this role would stay at the OCOT, but was reminded by his staff that it was to be an independent body. The Committee, again reiterated the belief that the OCOT should remain responsible for the classification of trades.

The Minister raised concerns about how an individual can be assured they will get a fair shake in their classification review. There was a general discussion around the concept of an Independent Review Committee, with the recommendation that responsibility should rest with the OCOT. However, it was felt that if this had to go to a Committee, similar to the Ratios, then it should be a fixed Committee of five (5), one (1) person from the MOL, one (1) person from Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities and three people from the OCOT.

The Minister suggested that he didn't see any reason to be afraid of that structure and would take that idea forward.

On the Scopes of Practice

The Committee presented its position that the OCOT inherited these from the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities, and that and the scopes of practice, were grossly out of date, and required an overhaul with regard to structure and content.

The Committee suggested that the OCOT deal with this area in conjunction with the Trade Boards.

The concern raised by the Minister was around time frame, and how quickly this could be done. The delegation suggested a year to two years, would suffice. The Minister also raised the issue that when finished and there are disputes, how might they get resolved, asking how should this not be the role for the OLRB? The Committee again reiterated that we didn't believe the OLRB was the correct body to handle such disputes, rather, an appeal process should be included in a new and fully negotiated Scopes of Practice. With respect to the role of the OLRB, again the Committee noted that any issues being identified as requiring the attention of the OLRB, should be handled by the OCOT.

The OLRB is really a mechanism used predominantly by the Construction Sector to deal with work jurisdiction between unions, its work was not intended to drill down, to deal with individual demarcation issues between the Trades.

Lastly, the Committee suggested that with a full, exhaustive and negotiated Scope of Practice between the Trades, we will ultimately have better trained Enforcement Officers, and we should be able to

reduce and hopefully eliminate the need for any Appeals. However, if an appeal arises, the OCOT is well positioned to deal with them, as they dealt with the development and negotiation of the new Scopes of Practice.

The issue of Enforcement, gave rise to the notion that you cannot protect the public interest or provide any form of consumer protection, when approximately 55 per cent of the Trades are not members of the OCOT.

This was the result of the implementation of the Ministerial Exemption and remains a major cause for concern. It should be noted that the drive to have all the Trades as part of the OCOT has nothing to do with membership fees it's about the public interest and that all Trades should be governed by the same rules under the *College of Trades Act*.

The Committee meets on an ad-hoc basis, and continues to monitor changes and developments as they pertain to matters related to training and apprenticeships in the province of Ontario.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Andrew Cleary, ATU 1189

Bill Acorn, IBEW 353

Erik Hueglin, IBEW 353

Jeff Richardson, USW

John Breslin, Unifor

John Grimshaw, IBEW CCO

John Ives, Power Workers

Karl Dean, OSSTF

Kevin O'Dwyer, OECTA

Lisa Bastien, CLC

Rob Armbruster, UFCW

VE:as: cope343

Liz Fong, COPE

Lou Pagrach, IAMAW

Peter DaPrato, IATSE

Ray Hamel, Unifor

Tom Reid, USW (retired)

Vince Kacaba, UA 46

Vern Edwards OFL Staff

Chris Buckley OFL Officer

ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN JOBS COMMITTEE

This committee was newly constituted in the spring of 2017.

The OFL Environment and Green Job Committee meets to tackle climate change with an eye to fairness and equality. Not all communities and workers are impacted equally by climate change and a just transition to post-carbon economy. We know that those who suffer the most from climate change have the least control over their surroundings. Environmental racism is real. Racialized people live in closer proximity to environmental burdens, such as polluting industries and waste disposal sites, than non-racialized Ontarians.

The Environment and Green Jobs Committee of the OFL will explore various challenges that a just transition towards a low carbon economy presents. It exists to ensure that such a shift sustains decent jobs and livelihoods for all. Together, labour can make climate action a driver for sustainable economic growth and social progress.

The OFL's Environment and Green Job Committee will explore the need to support workers in carbon-intensive industries when their jobs are being changed or eliminated. Workers need a voice in decision-making and in retraining. They also need income bridging and unemployment benefits as well as community investment in the creation of good green jobs.

We will not wait any longer to address climate change.

CAMPAIGN INITIATIVES

Mobilize and drive changes, through the OFL's Environment/Green Jobs Committee, to minimize our collective carbon footprint, to address issues of climate justice, and stop environmental inequities, including environmental racism.

Champion, through the OFL's Environment and Green Jobs Committee, a just transition to green jobs and supports for communities impacted by climate change.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Frank Saptel, IAMAW

Gerry LeBlanc, USW

Joanne Azevedo, CUPE

Venai Raniga, CUPE

Adam Lemieux, OECTA

Matt Davenport, UFCW

Scott Travers, IFPTE

Ken Bondy, Unifor

John Cartwright, TYRLC

Earl Burt, OSSTF

Kim Kent, CLC

Patty Coates, OFL Officer

Vern Edwards, OFL Staff

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Ontario Federation of Labour Health & Safety Committee allows affiliates to centrally further the goals of the labour movement in ensuring that the health and safety of every worker is respected and upheld. The OFL Health and Safety Committee works with our community partners in health and safety, like the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW), the Workers Health and Safety Centre (WHSC), the OFL's Prevention Link and other trade union committees dedicated to safe and healthy workplaces in Ontario. With the support of the Health and Safety department, the OFL Health and Safety Committee submits reports, advises and makes recommendations on health and safety matters and issues from a provincial specific perspective to the OFL Executive Board.

CAMPAIGN INITIATIVES

The Committee has continued to work on a broad range of issues in the health and safety field. It has worked to keep the affiliates up-to-date on those issues, as well as the concerns of the Committee. The Committee has met with the Ministry of Labour (MOL) staff and those from the Prevention Office of the MOL as well as the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) to discuss workplace health and safety issues of concern to the affiliates. Issues discussed have included:

- enforcement of the legislation;
- Ministry and WSIB policy and procedures;
- the role of health and safety in experience rating and the new rate framework;
- accreditation; and.
- occupational disease prevention, including funding for the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers.

The Committee continues to network with the Workers Health and Safety Centre, the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers and the Workers Health and Safety Legal Clinic.

In January of 2016 the Project Manager for Metron Construction was sentenced to three-and-a-half years for criminal negligence causing death for his role in connection to four workers who were killed in the collapse of a swing stage. A fifth worker was seriously injured. The conviction included one count of criminal negligence causing bodily harm. The project manager is currently out on bail while his sentence is being appealed.

The OFL has prepared an information package that is sent to the police which includes a letter from OFL President Chris Buckley urging that they consider criminal negligence by the employer as a possible cause of the fatality. Over the last two years the OFL has received several letters from police stating that they are doing just that.

In 2016, two more employers were charged by police for criminal negligence causing death. One of those fatalities was in Sarnia, where a worker was killed and several others injured at Veolia Environmental Services when a dust collector exploded. The company, and the manager were charged with one count of criminal negligence causing death and five counts of criminal negligence causing bodily harm. In a second case, a worker at Detour Gold Mine died of cyanide poisoning while working in the mine. The company was charged with criminal negligence causing death. These cases are still before the courts.

Progress is slow but the OFL will continue to reach out to police departments across Ontario when we hear of a worker being killed on the job.

The OFL will continue the Kill a Worker Go to Jail campaign until criminal negligence by the employer is a routine part of the investigation for every workplace death and negligent employers are sent to jail for killing workers.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Andréane Chénier, CUPE	Pearl Sawyer, UFCW
Angela Fairweather, PSAC	Rick Sansom, IAMAW
Barry Fowlie, Workers United	Rick Young, UFCW
Behiye Cinkilic, PSAC	Sari Sairanen, Unifor
Blain Morin, CUPE	Sylvia Boyce, USW
David Romanowicz, IFPTE	Valence Young, ETFO)
Eddie Ste. Marie, CLC	Chris Buckley, OFL Officer
Jane Ste. Marie, OSSTF	
John Pecsénye, OECTA	
Mike Dix, Ironworkers	

VE:as: cope343

PENSION COMMITTEE

The OFL is committed to fighting for retirement security for all. Whether through a guaranteed workplace pension or public programs, every worker should live out their retirement with dignity. With this mandate in mind, the OFL's Pension Committee convenes regularly to discuss and formulate positions on proposed amendments to pension legislation and changes in pension policies.

CAMPAIGN INITIATIVES

Expanding pension coverage for all workers

The labour movement has long pushed for the secure retirement for all Canadians. With the announcement of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan in 2014, the OFL and our affiliates worked closely with the Ontario government to ensure that the made-in-Ontario pension plan enhanced the retirement security of every worker – to create a universal and non-exclusionary plan for workers. Because of our collective leadership in making retirement security a top priority, we saw a historic win in 2016: an enhancement to the Canada Pension Plan (CPP). Although we would have liked to have seen a doubling of CPP benefits, we are encouraged to see elected officials recognizing that maintaining the status quo is not an option. Along with the CLC, we continue to advocate that no Canadians, particularly women and persons with disabilities, are excluded from the enhanced benefits.

Resisting attacks on defined benefit pension plans

Over the past several years, our members have experienced unprecedented attacks on their defined benefit workplace pension plans. Under the guise of austerity, employers are increasingly attacking pensions, proposing massive benefit cuts or even an outright conversion to target benefit or defined contribution plans. These other plans do not offer the traditional secure defined benefits and shift the bulk of risk from employers to members.

The OFL has made submissions on the government's proposed pension solvency framework for defined benefit plans as well as written several letters to the Minister, reiterating the importance of balancing benefit adequacy and benefit security. We continue to call for an increase to the Pension Benefits Guaranteed Fund that keeps pace with inflation levels (beyond the increase to \$1500 that we won earlier this year); incorporate a consent mechanism for active and retired members for any reforms to solvency funding; and reiterating our concerns over the use of a Provision for Adverse Deviation as a mechanism to achieve benefit security.

Strengthening the new framework for target benefit multi-employer pension plans

Target benefit multi-employer pension plans (MEPPs) cover a large number of unionized employees in the construction, retail, and industrial sectors. Trade unions have taken an active role not only in creating these plans through collective bargaining, but also in sponsoring those plans on an ongoing

basis, bargaining for increased contributions where necessary, and appointing trustees to their governing boards. As a result, the target benefit MEPP sector has proved comparatively strong and resilient as a provider of retirement income.

With the announcement in 2017 for a new framework for target benefit MEPPs, the OFL and its affiliates have recommended the following to the Minister: address MEPPs only in a collectively bargained environment; ensure trustees represent all plan members; include not-for-profit entities in the definition of Specified Ontario Multi-Employer Pension Plans (SOMEPP); and provide board of trustees with sufficient discretion to manage MEPPs. We'll continue to engage the government on these issues.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Alex D. McKinnon, USW

Aurélie Sarrabezolles, IAMAW

Bhupinder Sanghera, Workers United

Brian O'Keefe, CUPE

Chris Roberts, CLC

Chris Watson, CUPE

Corey Vermey, Unifor

David Leacock, Unifor

Erin Harrison, CLC

Gord Assman, OFUR

Jeff Richardson, USW

Joe Pece, OECTA

Kevin Skerrett, CUPE

Laura Brownell, The Society

Mark Janson, CUPE

Michelle Johnston, The Society of Energy Professionals

Murray Gold, Koskie Minsky

Scott Travers, The Society

Shelley Page, OSSTF

Troy Lundblad, USW

Venai Raniga, CUPE

Wynne Hartviksen, CUPE

Simon Archer, Goldblatt Partners

Patty Coates, OFL Officer

Thevaki Thevaratnam, OFL Staff

TT/as: cope343

WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

The primary role of the OFL Workers' Compensation Committee is to advocate on a broad level to ensure injured workers receive the compensation they are entitled to and are treated with dignity and justice. The Committee raises issues important to workers injured on the job, holds demonstrations and lobbies the Ministry of Labour. The Committee works closely with the Ontario Network of Injured Workers (ONIWG), who hold a position on the OFL Executive Council, and Legal Clinics that specialize in workers' compensation issues. Further, the OFL Workers' Compensation Committee, advises and makes recommendations on workers' compensation matters to the OFL Executive Board.

CAMPAIGN INITIATIVES

Working groups

There were a number of working group meeting with senior levels of the Board attempting to improve the services available to injured workers including quality of Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) decision letters, improvements to fairness in the appeals by making the intent to object form available to injured workers with negative decisions, and greater leniency on appeal time limits. The Committee was successful on some fronts but frustrated on others. The Committee continues to work to ensure injured workers voices are heard.

Reports

In 2016 and 2017, a series of reports were released by the OFL, ONIWG and legal clinics showing what injured workers and advocates have long known: there are serious problems with the way that the WSIB considers medical evidence. These reports highlighted a range of issues, including failing to heed medical advice regarding readiness to return to work, insufficient treatment, blaming 'pre-existing conditions' for injuries clearly caused at work, questionable use of Board funded specialty clinics, using "expected recovery times" to declare a worker healed, purchasing reports from private medical consultants who never meet the worker (also called "paper doctors"), and even simply ignoring the available medical evidence altogether.

Reports include:

- Prescription Overruled - by ONIWG and Ontario Federation of Labour, 2016
- No Evidence: Decisions of the WSIB - by IAVGO Legal Clinic, 2017
- Bad Medicine - by IAVGO Legal Clinic and Anthony Singleton, 2017

Bill 127:

The OFL participated in the consultation process on the draft policies. To read our submission go to www.OFL.ca. Bill 127, Stronger, Healthier Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2017, passed into law on May 17, 2017. Bill 127 will remove part of the current discriminatory limit on workers' compensation for mental stress injuries. The Act states that mental stress is not compensable except for in a case of "an

acute reaction to a sudden and unexpected traumatic event arising out of and in the course of his or her employment.” The new law, effective for injuries on or after January 1, 2018, will state that a worker is entitled to benefits for “chronic or traumatic mental stress”. This change is the result of a hard-fought campaign that included three successful Charter challenges to the legislation, years of stakeholder advocacy, and complaints to the Ontario ombudsman and the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

The legislation retains the limitation that mental stress is not compensable if it arises out of employment decisions such as a change to working conditions or discipline. This provision has not yet been successfully challenged as discriminatory, though it may be in the future. The legislation does not remedy the injustice faced by workers previously and currently affected by the illegal bar on mental stress injuries. Workers with chronic or unexpected mental stress injuries have been denied compensation for their injuries since the section came into force in 1998, and these workers will still be subject to the prior version of the provision.

In Bill 127, the Government also introduced new provisions allowing the Board to create different evidentiary requirements for different types of injuries, and the Board appears to be using that power in its new stress policies. In the consultation process the Board used the “significant contributing factor test” as burden of proof in its draft mental health policy. The test, which has been applied in more than 15,000 workers’ compensation decisions at the Tribunal and have never been successfully challenged at judicial review, assesses if a worker’s employment made a significant contribution to the occurrence of an injury. Unfortunately, when the WSIB released the final policies in early October they chose to use “predominant cause”. Therefore, unlike workers with other injuries, injured workers claiming benefits for chronic mental stress will continue to be unfairly restricted by having to establish a higher standard of proof for entitlement.

Conferences, education, and summits

We held numerous conferences, education sessions, and summits. These include a Joint Community Strategy Session co-sponsored with the Provincial Building Trades, a joint conference with ONIWG, an educational on finding help for injured workers in crisis, participation in ONWIG’s annual Christmas demos at the Ministry of Labour and Injured Worker Day which falls on June 1 of every year.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Angela Fairweather, PSAC

David Chezzi, CUPE

Debbie Carmichael, CUPW

Debbie Coulson, IUOE

Eddie Ste. Marie, CLC

Inderdeep Sidhu, Workers United

Jane Ste. Marie, OSSTF

Joanne Ford, UFCW

Gino DiCiocco, OECTA

Inderdeep Sidhu, Workers United

Jane Ste. Marie, OSSTF

Joanne Ford, UFCW

Karl Crevar, ONIWG

Mike Corrado, IAMAW

Pearl Sawyer, UFCW

Sally Chiappetta, UBCJ

Sari Sairanen, Unifor

Vinay Sharma, Unifor

Wally Devoe, CUPE

Wally Polischuk, CUPW

Alec Farquhar, OWA

Andy LaDouceur, USW

Ahmad Gaied, OFL Officer

Laurie Hardwick, OFL Staff

YOUNG WORKERS' COMMITTEE

Young workers will lead the change we wish to see in the world. Today's young workers' find themselves at the forefront of the struggle for a just economy and decent work. In many ways, they are among the most negatively affected by the rise of precarious work. They are affected by cuts to social services, more part-time, contract based work and an increase of unpaid internships that limit their ability to obtain meaningful on-the-job experience. Corporate greed has produced an increase of two-tier wages and benefits that affect young workers acutely and adversely.

The OFL's Young Workers' Committee has responded to this reality by broadening participation in the Committee, amplifying young workers' voices in social media, and making equity and leadership development a central concern.

The goal of the Committee is to bring attention to the intersection of equity and youth while giving voice to those who have the most to lose (or gain) from Ontario's economic future.

Young workers' are most affected by changes in the workplace, and thus best equipped to lead the way forward in the fight against precarious work.

CAMPAIGN INITIATIVES

Young people are not for free: advocating for Paid Internships

There are an estimated 100,000 to 300,000 unpaid internships in Canada each year, depriving young people of economic opportunity and potentially displacing paid workers. Only 52.3% of Ontario young people aged 15-24 held paid employment in 2014, down from 56.7% before the recession. An increasing number of students are graduating without any work experience. This lack of experience can create a permanent "scarring" effect on future employability.

On October 19, 2016, the OFL had the opportunity to speak to the NDP's Bill 64: *Protecting Interns and Creating a Learning Economy Act, 2016*. We made sure to speak on behalf of young workers' need to transition from school to the workplace. We also had the opportunity to speak to removing the exemptions in employment and labour laws that negatively impact young workers such as the student minimum wage exemption. We stressed the need to lift the floor for all workers.

Our advocacy work on this issue for young workers will need to continue. Read the full report at: <http://ofl.ca/index.php/ofl-presentation-standing-committee-bill-64-protecting-interns-creating-learning-economy-act-2016/>

Education is a Right! Campaigning for Free Tuition

The OFL partnered with the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) for the National Student Day of Action on November 2. We reiterated the call for free tuition, a \$15 minimum wage regardless of job status and end to the growth of precarious work. OFL Executive Vice-President Ahmad Gaied spoke at the Toronto rally where hundreds of young workers and students marched. Our continued partnership with the student movement is critical to winning a brighter future for young workers in Ontario.

Make It Fair: Young Workers Organizing for Decent Work

The Make It Fair campaign, in partnership with the Fight for \$15 and Fairness campaign has been mobilizing for changes to employment and labour laws across Ontario.

In January 2017, we held a 2-day training where young workers practiced recruiting volunteers to win decent work. We took those skills to workplaces across the province and into more than 50 meetings with MPPs where young workers shared their experiences and viewpoints about the need for more full-time jobs, less contract based work, removing exemptions to the minimum wage, and to increasing access to unionization so young workers can have a voice on the job.

The Make It Fair postcard campaign gathered hundreds of postcards which were delivered to MPPs by young workers. Many more organized meetings, made phone calls, and wrote letters pushing for decent work.

Young workers also participated in Make It Fair webinars and solidarity breakfasts where they practiced telling their stories to illustrate the need for changes to Bill 148. They used those skills at 10 hearings in cities across the province on Bill 148.

Campaigning for decent work has created a space for young workers to get involved in advocating and organizing for change. The result of young workers getting together has meant significant victories in Bill 148 including a \$15 minimum wage, greater access to keeping and joining a union and paid sick days.

Providing Opportunity: OFL-AILin Canada Jack Layton Labour Post-Secondary Scholarship

The OFL awarded two \$2500 scholarships for post-secondary studies in honour of retired or deceased trade union activists who have contributed to the labour movement in Ontario. These scholarships are awarded for the two best essays, videos or posters submitted by members or the children of members of the OFL who are heading for the first year of full-time study at a college or university in Ontario. This year's scholarship was presented in collaboration with AIL in Canada.

The OFL Young Workers' committee made equity and decent work central focus of the essays questions encouraging participants from equity-seeking groups to apply, and over the past two years, has attracted a record number of applicants. The essay question for the 2017 scholarship required applicants to reflect on their own experiences of equity and underscore the importance of equity-based work for the labour movement.

Planning for our Future: OFL Young Workers' Assembly

The OFL Young Workers' Committee responded to a call for stronger mentorship and solidarity among youth within the Ontario labour movement by organizing a young workers' assembly to immediately precede the 2017 OFL Convention.

The day-long session was open to all young workers and allies and included morning panels and afternoon workshops. The assembly's focus was on organizing for decent work and stopping the rise of hate with workshops including hands-on strategies for mobilizing young workers into action, gathering input and leadership from community allies and a wide range of young labour organizers actively engaged in campaigns. The assembly provided participants with an opportunity to get to know other young workers in Ontario's labour movement, discuss relevant issues and share strategies.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

At the time of publication, the membership of the OFL Young Workers' Committee is as follows:

Alfonso D'Ambra, IAMAW

Anthony Carabache, OECTA

Evan Johnston, CUPE

Felicia Forbes, CUPE

Joel Thelosen, UFCW

Lauren Baert, PSAC

Sandra Dignagbo, PSAC

Vanitha Ethiraju, COPE

Briana Broderick, USWr

Ahmad Gaied, OFL Officer

Melisa Bayon, OFL Staff

The committee would like to thank all those who participated since the last convention.

MB/km: cope343

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14th OFL Biennial Convention November 20-24, 2017

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

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