

SUMMER | 2018

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THE NEXT FOUR YEARS IN ONTARIO



It was the wildest election in living memory. The Liberal Party collapsed, the NDP elected the most MPP's in a generation, and Doug Ford is the new Premier. His message of tax cuts, lower gas prices, and challenging the privilege of elites hit home, including with many working families. The Ford campaign cynically refused to provide any concrete indication of how a Conservative government would pay for its many promises.

There will be four years of turmoil across Ontario, but many people don't see that yet – they believe they voted to end hallway medicine, lower gas prices and turf overpaid executives, all while front line jobs will be protected. What they don't realize is how much public services and public sector workers will be under attack to pay for promised tax giveaways of the Ford campaign. Or the reality that private sector employers will be given a free hand to exploit workers, wages will stagnate and precarious work will expand.

We saw how Mike Harris and Rob Ford moved with lightning speed to privatize assets and gut workers' rights. There is no question that this Conservative regime will operate the same way, and that labour and community activists must be prepared for an immediate fight to defend

public services and frontline workers. But some of the first acts of the government may be popular, so our messaging must be accurate. It will be essential to safeguard democracy in our public institutions, because a key tactic of the Conservatives and U.S. Republicans is to strip accountability from government decision-making process.

History shows that each time the Conservatives take power they drive down the standards that working people have secured. Their rhetoric criticizes the "elites", but their actions inevitably align with the interests of big business. And no matter how much some moderate corporate leaders decry the behaviour of politicians like Ford or Trump, business wants lower corporate taxes and most will accommodate

themselves to an agenda that weakens workers' rights and economic equality.

But there were some victories - we can celebrate the election of many dynamic New Democrats to Queen's Park. The NDP ran on a bold platform of social justice, and the ten new NDP MPP's in Toronto will join Peter Tabuns as champions in confronting the direction of the new government. It will be essential that they help give voice to resistance and assist in building powerful movements for social justice across the province.

A difficult battleground will be the issue of climate change and just transition to a low-carbon future. His abrupt reversal of cap-and-trade will throw important energy conservation investments into turmoil, and eliminate funding for vital mitigation measures such as energy retrofits of schools and social housing, as well as industrial transition. A Ford government will mimic the same approach to the environment as the Harper regime, setting us back years in our efforts to take on this crucial challenge.

For cities and school boards, the relationship with the provincial government is fraught with difficulty. A central demand of parents and education workers is to fix the broken funding formula and invest in classroom resources. Municipalities are still recovering from the disastrous downloading of costs and services by the Harris government decades ago. Transit workers are concerned about a takeover and privatization of subway service. There is no plan to address crumbling social housing stock, and no mention of support for social services. The wild card for Ontario is the impact of Trump's moves on tariffs. With a potential trade war looming, industrial workers need a plan to defend their jobs.

The labour movement has learned from experience that we must resist every attack on working people, on the poor or marginalized, on civil society and on democracy. It is never easy to maintain solidarity in the face of powerful forces that will attempt to divide and conquer. Our leadership will be tested many times. Now is the time to defend the hard-won progress we made in recent years – including the minimum wage, Bill 148, partial

pharmacare, expanded childcare, and more, and show that Ford will hurt the living standards of most Ontarians if he tries to reverse those gains.

We must join with all others to reject the politics of greed and division, building broad coalitions and working in both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary forms of struggle. And we must continuously talk to the working families that voted for

Ford about the real impact of the decisions his government makes. Through all this, we have to take time to deepen the political understanding of activists in every union, including a new generation of leaders. It won't be an easy four years, but through our efforts we continue to strive for a better future, fighting for a society that provides fairness, good jobs and dignity for all.

The Labour Council will:

- Undertake a comprehensive outreach to all affiliates and activists to prepare for the tough struggles ahead
- Expand our ability to communicate with union members, diverse communities and the general public about the values of social, economic, racial, gender and climate justice that anchor our labour movement
- Build broad coalitions to challenge regressive policies of the Ford government
- Defend workers' rights and the gains in Bill 148 including the \$15 Minimum Wage, and urge unions to undertake mass organizing drives among precarious workers
- Work to overcome the divisions within the house of labour so that we can build a strong, united union movement as the foundation for the important work we must carry out over the next four years
- Continue to call for electoral reform in favour of proportional representation so that the true wishes of the voters are reflected in the legislature.

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TORONTO PRIDE YORK REGION

When Ontario Services Are Cut, Sliced And Frozen Who Loses?

Despite being Canada's most populous province, Ontario just got smaller. Not in population but in services. Newly elected PC Premier, Doug Ford is looking to deliver his election promise of \$6.5 billion in "efficiencies" by executing some serious cuts to the public sector and this includes our schools.

Doug Ford is abolishing the cap and trade program we share with Quebec and California, the pricing system that put a dollar value on carbon pollution as a way of reducing emissions. The money is used to fund much needed infrastructure work that both addressed climate action while upgrading quality of life for thousands of Ontarians. Scrapping the program will cut billions needed to repair the crumbling schools, fix social housing and build transit.

He also froze all hiring across Ontario's Public Sector. This means no new Labour Inspectors who will go out to enforce Bill 148, crippling the first progress Ontario has seen in Labour and Employment law in two decades. There is no value to a law on paper if there is no enforcement. There can be no enforcement if there are no inspectors who go out to hundreds of workplaces to investigate and ask questions. What does this mean for the workers of Ontario, especially those battling precarity and employer abuse?

Ford's first priority was getting rid of the 6 million dollar man, the CEO of Hydro One, Mayo Schmidt. They got him to retire with a one-time payment of \$400,000 payout in lieu of post-retirement benefits. But no mention of the \$10 million Mr. Schmidt will receive in stock options after retiring! We are already seeing growing threats

of privatization. The LCBO is under attack as Ford actively looks to allow convenience and grocery stores to sell alcohol. The LCBO brings in \$2 billion into Ontario's public money chest each year – that's a lot of roads, hospitals, books in schools and medicine to keep our families healthy. Also, let's not forget the good jobs with benefits that are created because LCBO is owned by the public.

Finding \$6.5 billion of efficiencies by selling what Ontario owns is the same as burning the furniture to heat your home. Do you really want an extra \$5 in your wallet, if your child's education is crumbling, your parents can't pay for medication, you can't afford to update your furnace and your neighbours are losing their jobs? It's an inconvenient question, but it's our job to ask!

A Review by Gordon Campbell? *You gotta be kidding!*

Doug Ford swears he's going to figure out what's going on with Ontario's finances. So, who better to lead the investigation than a man who has experience fudging numbers for his own political gain? Ford appointed former BC Premier Gordon Campbell to lead an independent inquiry into Ontario's finances. Ironically, the person Ford is asking to review Ontario's finances has plenty of experience misleading a different province on the state of its finances.

When Campbell's BC Liberals came into power in 2001, the previous BC NDP government left him a massive

\$1.5 billion surplus – a figure later confirmed by BC's auditor general. But after the election, Campbell appointed a handpicked panel of BC Liberal donors to investigate the province's finances and later falsely claimed BC was facing a \$5 billion deficit, using it to discredit the former government and justify nearly a billion dollars in corporate tax cuts.

Sketchy, unaccountable deals

Campbell isn't exactly known for being fiscally responsible, given some of the biggest cost overruns in BC history happened under his watch. When Campbell's government tried to renovate the roof of BC Place stadium the cost was nearly half a billion dollars more than estimated.

After the new roof came in at \$563 million, Campbell's government tried to claim their original estimate of \$100 million was not a real estimate.

And when Campbell tried to build a new conference centre in Vancouver, the final price ballooned from \$495 million to \$883 million – nearly \$400 million more than it was supposed to cost. A hydro project building 350 km of transmission lines to northern BC was pegged at \$400 million but ended up closer to \$750 million. On the other hand, given his views on carbon taxes, it is a little strange Ford says he trusts the financial wisdom of a man who introduced North America's very first carbon tax. Just saying..

Meet our Orange 11 - City of Toronto's NDP Members of Provincial Parliament



Jill Andrew – Toronto St Paul's An award-winning equity advocate, co-founder of Body Confidence Canada, co-owner of Glad Day Bookshop - the world's oldest LGBT bookstore. Jill works tirelessly to end appearance-based discrimination, harassment and bullying.

Doly Begum – Scarborough SouthWest Dynamic community leader, she chaired the Scarborough Health Coalition and Warden Woods Community Centre. As coordinator of Keep Hydro Public campaign she helped stop privatization of Toronto Hydro and Wasaga Distribution.



Jessica Bell – University Rosedale Executive Director of TTCriders, lecturer at Ryerson University, director of the California Food & Justice Coalition and an advocate for environmental justice. Recipient of Toronto Community Foundation's Vital People Award.

Cris Glover – Spadina Fort York School Board Trustee, local soccer and hockey coach, member of the Dufferin Grove Residents Association and the parent council at Dawson St Public School. He has also taught at Ryerson Public School and Central Tech.



Faisal Hassan – York South Weston Since coming to Canada from Somalia, he has focused on housing and homelessness issues. Volunteered with the Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation, Habitat for Humanity and the Weston King Neighbourhood Centre.

Bhutila Karpoche – Parkdale HighPark First Tibetan-Canadian to be elected to public office, she worked with MPP Cheri DiNovo, was a board member of the Canadian Tibetan Association of Ontario, and an advocate for public health, affordable housing and fair wages.



Rima Berns-McGown – Beaches East York Rima was born in Apartheid South Africa, which fueled her life-long work in fighting for the creation of socially just and diverse societies. A respected author, researcher, and former University of Toronto professor.

Suze Morrison – Toronto Centre An experienced advocate recognized for her work on healthcare, community safety, inclusion, and Indigenous issues. Her passion for change is rooted in her personal experience of overcoming poverty, precarious housing, and gender-based violence.



Tom Rakocevic – Humber River Black Creek Lifelong local resident and dedicated community advocate. Tom was Executive Assistant to City Councillor Anthony Perruzza

Marit Stiles – Davenport School Board Trustee and board member of Toronto Foundation for Student Success, she is President of Canada's NDP and National Director of Public Policy and Research for ACTRA.



Peter Tabuns – Toronto Danforth Voted best MPP twice by NOW Magazine, ONDP critic for energy and environmental issues. Past Toronto City Councillor, Executive Director of Greenpeace Canada, worked with Ontario Nurses and chaired Toronto Board of Health.

HOUSING & RETROFITS

ACORN started door knocking in 2004 in Toronto, Ottawa and Hamilton. Since then we have facilitated 20- to 40-minute house visits with over 150,000 of the lowest-income tenants across these three cities.

During each visit we ask, "What is the biggest issue you would like to see changed?" Undoubtedly, the most common issue we hear about is the substandard state of both public and private housing.

Common issues experienced by low-income tenants are leaking pipes causing mice, rats, cockroaches, bedbugs and mould; as well as poorly insulated windows leading to freezing temperatures in the winter and extreme discomfort due to heat in the summer.

For many vulnerable people, substandard units lead to negative health outcomes, such as asthma, stress, diseases carried by bugs and more. In addition, it is incredibly difficult for people to even consider carbon emissions when they have no option but

to heat their apartment with their oven, or have faulty windows that need to be left open while running air conditioning units.

In the previous government's Climate Change Action Plan, tenants were promised \$385 million to \$500 million for social housing retrofits, plus \$300 to \$400 million in incentives for retrofits in other private apartment buildings, funded through cap-and-trade revenues.

The diversion of this money away from retrofits represents a huge loss for hundreds of thousands of tenants across the province. We are concerned about the ripple effect that substandard housing will have on tenants, and anticipate an increase in socioeconomic and health inequality as a result of this funding cut.



Research has shown that every \$1 million spent on social housing retrofits generates energy savings of \$1.3 million to \$3.9 million, as well as additional benefits to residents, such as improved wellbeing. Without this money, the province's most vulnerable tenants will be forced to continue living in substandard units that are up to 25 per cent less energy efficient than houses.

Marva Burnett
President
ACORN Canada, Toronto

TALK IS CHEAP *NOW WHERE IS THE MONEY?*

When the Ford Conservatives abolish Ontario's Cap and Trade program, billions of dollars disappear that was intended for retrofits of buildings to reduce carbon pollution, so the question is where will the money come from for this vital work?

Hospital Energy Efficiency Program (\$64 million)

Making hospitals more energy efficient and redirecting savings into patient care.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (school retrofits) (\$200 million)

Building upgrades in schools to create cleaner and less expensive facilities.

Campus Retrofit Program (\$214 million)

Building upgrades on postsecondary campuses to create cleaner and less expensive facilities.

Home Energy Audits and Retrofits (\$100 million)

Enhancing existing home energy audit and retrofit programs to help homeowners reduce energy costs.

Social Housing Apartment Retrofit Program (\$82 million)

Renovating large social housing apartment buildings (150+ units).

Social Housing Apartment Improvement Program (\$575 million)

Improvements to high-rise social housing apartment buildings over four years.

Mass Timber Buildings Project

Investing in tall-wood building skills development.

SMART Green (\$25 million)

Helping small and medium-sized businesses implement upgrades to their manufacturing processes.

Low-Carbon Building Skills (\$9.6 million)

Investing in training current and future workers to become skilled in low-carbon retrofits and construction.

CITY COUNCIL REPORT CARD 2014-2018

The Labour movement in Toronto works hard to improve the quality of life for the people of this city. That quality of life is built on a foundation of strong public services servicing every neighbourhood, and **programs that sustain healthy communities**. Those depend on the women and men who work both on the front lines and in supporting roles. Those workers deserve **fair wages and working conditions**. The city also has valuable **public assets** which need to be defended. The Labour Council produces a grading matrix based on voting records and leadership demonstrated by the current City Council members, which are assessed on their stand on these crucial issues..

Old Ward		John Tory Mayor	Mayor Tory has often disappointed. He is hesitant to raise money to run the City, other than for his SmartTrack plan. He intended to privatize Toronto Hydro and solid waste collection, but could not get the votes. On a few issues he supports a progressive approach, on most he enables a conservative austerity agenda. His leadership of the city leaves much room for improvement.	C
1		Vincent Crisanti Etobicoke North (running in new Ward 1)	A Ford loyalist, who has consistently supported a right wing agenda including on race relations. Support's Doug Ford's Bill 5 slashing Council seats.	F
2		Mike Ford Etobicoke North	Quickly transforming into the style of his uncles. Actually voted against improvements to the community benefits package for the Woodbine Casino.	F
3		Stephen Holyday Etobicoke Centre	The other Etobicoke Councillor who voted against improving community benefits and has one of the most right-wing voting records.	F
4		John Campbell Etobicoke Centre	Voted for every privatization motion on the floor. However, he did take action against Neo-Nazi meeting in his ward.	F
5		Justin J. Di Ciano Etobicoke Lakeshore	Plagued by scandals of corruption and possible electoral fraud, but is fronting the group favouring Ford's Bill 5.	F
6		Mark Grimes Etobicoke Lakeshore	A voice for developers, votes for austerity, and forced the lockout of IATSE at the CNE. But did oppose garbage privatization.	F
7		Giorgio Mammoliti York West	There is no limit to his outrageous behaviour to gain attention. Usually votes hard right, except for garbage privatization.	F
8	✓	Anthony Perruzza York West	Sides with workers, strong defender of local democracy. Mentor to young activists - one who was elected as NDP MPP in June.	B
9	✓	Maria Augimeri York Centre	Fiercely loyal to workers issues, she has always voted for public services and to defend employment land.	B
10		James Pasternak York Centre	He supports contracting out, and voted in favour of potentially privatizing Toronto Hydro and Parking Authority. But did vote for regulations for short term rentals	D+
11		Frances Nunziata York South-Weston	The Council Speaker (once again) who has voted with Tory on almost everything, and in favour of cuts and contracting out.	F

12		Frank Di Giorgio York South-Weston	Long past his "best before" date. He voted to consider selling off Hydro and Parking, keeping with his regressive views on city finances.	F
13	✓	Sarah Doucette Parkdale High Park	Always a unifying voice, she has worked to improve community services and against privatization and contracting out. Strong local focus on her constituents.	B+
14	✓	Gord Perks Parkdale High Park	An insightful critic of the Mayor and right wing on Council. His advocacy on revenue tools and progressive public policy are much needed.	A
15		Josh Colle Eglinton Lawrence	Chair of the TTC, who is sometimes a swing vote on Council, but generally supports the Mayor's agenda.	C
16		Christin Carmichael Greb Eglinton Lawrence	Probably seen as the one of the most unpopular local councillors, she has been a hard line advocate for conservative ideology.	F
17		Cesar Palacio Davenport	Has consistently upheld the austerity agenda, works against environmental and progressive public policy.	F
18	✓	Ana Bailao Davenport	Strong advocate on housing, workers' issues and community benefits. Always a bridge builder within Council.	B+
19	✓	Mike Layton Trinity Spadina	Leader on environmental and road safety issues, as well as both Casino fights. Solid pro-labour vote.	A
20	✓	Joe Cressy Trinity Spadina	New face on Council has learned to work multiple sides to achieve agreement while maintaining principles. His work on safe injection sites will save many lives.	A
21	✓	Joe Mihevc St. Paul's	Mihevc is a veteran leader on poverty, social justice and health issues. Progressive transit expert	A
22		Josh Matlow St. Paul's	Matlow is a wild card. Ardent opponent of the Scarborough Subway, has led on street safety and other local issues.	C
23		John Filion Willowdale	Has had a mixed voting record, and went wrong way on TIEGs tax giveaway. Fights gentrification and condo over-development in his ward.	D
24		David Shiner Willowdale	Veteran Conservative has kept himself in the Mayor's corner. Leading voice for Ford's hijack of election.	F
25		Jaye Robinson Don Valley West	Profoundly anti-union, she was in charge of failed garbage privatization effort in 2017.	F
26		Jon Burnside Don Valley West	Votes on the Conservative side of Council, and hasn't shown much leadership on key issues.	F
27	✓	Kristyn Wong-Tam Toronto Centre-Rosedale	Council leader on racial and gender equity, helped initiate Women Win TO. Consistent supporter of labour issues	A
28		Lucy Troisi Toronto Centre-Rosedale	Hand picked by the Mayor and conservatives on Council. Her appointment in Pam McConnel's seat was a disgrace, and now she is breaking promise not to run.	F
29	✓	Mary Fragedakis Toronto Danforth	East York progressive shines for her work on increasing food security programs, and retail workers rights.	A

CITY COUNCIL REPORT CARD 2014-2018

30	✓	Paula Fletcher Toronto Danforth	Led fight to save public holidays for retail workers, and defending employment lands. Strong supporter of culture and film industries.	A
31	✓	Janet Davis Beaches East York	A long time defender of public services, and childcare in particular. Her strong social justice lens will be missed on Council when she retires.	A
32		Mary-Margaret McMahon Beaches East York	An environmentalist, and an advocate for a two-term limits. After her second term, not running again.	C
33	✓	Shelley Carroll Don Valley East	A veteran leader on progressive public policy and a strong voice for police accountability. Did not succeed in provincial election so back in Council race.	A
34		Denzil Minnan-Wong Don Valley East	Tory's Deputy Mayor has been a ruthless enforcer of right wing conservatism. Ran for Ford's Conservatives and lost.	F
35		Michelle Holland-Berardinetti Scarborough Southwest	Generally follows for the Mayor's agenda, seldom votes for progressive issues.	F
36		Gary Crawford Scarborough Southwest	Tory's Budget Chief who tries to penny pinch public services and find cuts in the system. Conservative on most issues.	F
37		Michael Thompson Scarborough Centre	He typically has a conservative voting record favouring big money, but showed leadership on the Woodbine community benefits debate.	D
38	✓	Glenn De Baeremaeker Scarborough Centre	A champion for Scarborough, and a subway to Town Centre. Good on worker issues, but sides with Ford's plan to cut Council to 25 seats	C
39		Jim Karygiannis Scarborough Agincourt	Can be infuriating on some issues, but helpful on garbage privatization and keeping public holidays for retail workers.	C-
40		Norm Kelly Scarborough Agincourt	Mostly known for his twitter performances, he has shown no leadership on Council this term.	F
41		Chin Lee Scarborough Rouge River	Has a mixed voting record. A fiscal conservative, but would listen to arguments on public services. Left to run in provincial election.	D
42	✓	Neethan Shan Scarborough Rouge River	Has demonstrated real leadership in bringing diversity issues to Council, solid vote on labour and public services since elected.	A
43		Paul Ainslie Scarborough East	Sides with Mayor's agenda on most issues, generally supports privatization.	F
44		Jim Hart Scarborough East	A recent appointee due to the death of Ron Moeser, he has generally been neutral on council.	D

A PEOPLE'S GUIDE TO NAFTA



The governments of North America are deep into a process of renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Since it was signed, NAFTA has been instrumental, along with other policies, in increasing wealth inequality, job insecurity, wage stagnation and the creation of a precarious work force. It has weakened public services and led to lower regulatory standards. Canada has been sued numerous times by American corporations under Chapter 11 over public policy that interferes with their potential profits.

The Council of Canadians vigorously opposed NAFTA and its predecessor, the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. It recommends that Canadians only support a new trade agreement for North America if it will:

- Remove Chapter 11.

- Put workers and their rights at the heart of a new agreement.
- Promote and protect public services.
- Include strong provisions to protect the environment and natural resources.
- Maintain the right to regulate in the public interest.
- Remove the energy chapter and cancel the proportional energy sharing provision.
- Remove all references to water.
- Maintain and expand the exemption for culture.
- Protect Canada's supply management system.
- Protect and enhance Indigenous rights.

Find out more at Canadians.org

Keep Up The Fight For Pharmacare



The Canadian Labour Congress is continuing to organize to win universal pharmacare. Canada is the only industrialized country with a public healthcare system that does NOT have pharmacare.

- 24 percent of respondents in Ontario said they or someone else in their household hadn't taken medication as prescribed because they couldn't afford to.
- Today, public spending in Ontario covers less than half the cost of prescription medicine.
- An estimated one in three of the province's 6,923,200 workers – 2,307,733 – don't have health benefits.
- Ontario's Drug Benefit covers seniors, but they still pay an annual deductible of \$100, and co-payments of \$6.11 on every prescription.

- The Ford Conservatives are reducing the recent partial Pharmacare program that would have covered prescription drug costs for anyone under the age of 25.

Everyone should have equal access to the prescription drugs they need regardless of where they live. It's time for a universal prescription drug plan. Help win pharmacare by talking to your family and friends, and filling out the online survey for the newly appointed Advisory Council on Pharmacare – go to www.letstalkhealth.ca

To find out more, go to aplanforeveryone.ca

And The Rich Get Richer

Canada's wealthiest family dynasties are 4,400 times richer than the average Canadian family and much more likely to keep that money in the family than they were two decades ago.



A new study by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA). Born To Win: Wealth concentration in Canada since 1999, compares the net worth of Canada's 87 wealthiest resident families (the Wealthy 87) to average families.

Canada's Wealthy 87 saw their net worth grow by an average of 37% between in four years to \$3 billion a family, while middle class Canadian families saw their net worth grow by only 16% over the same period; The Wealthy 87 now own 4,448 times as much wealth as the Canadian average, and have as much wealth as 12 million Canadians combined (\$259 billion)

Inheritance is a bigger factor for today's Wealthy 87, with 53% of wealthy families having passed their wealth down at least one generation compared to 45% in 1999;

Not only do these families control vast amounts of wealth, but their members are also disproportionately likely to be among the highest-paid CEOs in Canada.

"Canada is the only country in the G7 without an inheritance, estate or gift tax on tremendous family wealth," says the study's author David Macdonald. "Instituting an estate tax and eliminating tax preferences for capital gains and dividend income could go a long way to curbing the tendency of Canada's tax system to heighten socially, politically and economically harmful levels of wealth concentration in Canada."

Policyalternatives.ca

Retail Workers Deserve Statutory Holidays!!

Unifor Local 414 members led the campaign in Peel Region to prevent changes to their Holiday Shopping by-law.

Just as Toronto did, Peel Region held public consultations and allowed delegations at all their regional council meetings leading up to the staff report and final vote. Every two weeks workers spoke in front of regional councillors to have their stories told, And they were powerful. Single parents, who would have issues getting child care, families where both parents work retail and rarely get to have a meal together because of their work schedules, a grandmother who works in retail who is afraid for the future of her grandchildren and knows how devastating the loss of Sunday already had, and the effect on the family unit. Just as in Toronto, Peel Regional councillors voted

unanimously in favour of saving stat holidays.

Had York regional councillors listened to the retail workers affected by the change the outcome could have been different. Instead they chose a fast line approach which only heard the business side; they never had a chance to see the full picture and the face of people affected by

opening retail stores 364 days of the year.

With municipal elections fast approaching now is the time to put the pressure on those who are running for York city council, to overturn the Holiday shopping by-law and give back the 9 statutory holidays retail workers deserve.



ANOTHER TORONTO TRAGEDY

On Sunday July 22nd Torontonians were shocked to learn of the horrific shooting spree on Danforth Avenue that killed two innocent victims and wounded thirteen others.

Our thoughts go out to the victims of this tragic event and their families and loved ones. We thank the first responders and the bystanders who came to help the victims. This is not the first such incident that deserves universal condemnation, nor sadly will it be the last.

As each tragedy strikes, we will all be faced with a responsibility to search for solutions while showing resilience as a society. It is vital that our response starts with embracing our common humanity and building social solidarity rather than division. Peace, love and compassion are the themes of the vigils and local events held since that day to begin the healing in the community.

After the shootings on Danzig Street in 2012, Labour Council was deeply involved in an effort to bring together people from all walks of life to fashion a strategy to tackle gun violence and its root causes. That effort built on the learnings from experts as well as people on the front lines. It included calling for stronger gun control, as access to guns is a basic factor in the scale of harm which can be inflicted on others. Recently it has come to light that since the federal government scrapped the gun registry and associated controls, the number of firearms imported legally into Canada has skyrocketed. This is simply unacceptable.

Six years ago we sent every elected official in greater Toronto a comprehensive list of recommendations to address the complex nature of the roots of youth violence. Those recommendations put forward a hopeful vision for Toronto with a focus on three main areas: the desperate need for good jobs for both young people

and their parents, investing in strong community services, and addressing systemic barriers faced by racialized and marginalized communities. While these may not have averted the mental health crisis or motive of the shooter on the Danforth, they are important elements in dealing with the bigger crisis of gun violence.

We know there is no one action that will solve the problem of gun violence. It has claimed too many innocent victims in every part of the city. But we can start immediately by demanding that the Federal government restore all restrictions on gun purchase and registration, and bringing a complete ban to handguns and assault weapons into effect. And we must continue to pressure politicians at every level of government to follow through with the policies and programs that will change the dynamics that lead to young men picking up a gun and pulling the trigger.

Riding The Underground Freedom Train

On July 31st, hundreds turned out for Toronto's 6th annual Emancipation Day Underground Freedom Train ride. Organized by A Different Booklist on Bathurst Street, the event marked the abolition of slavery throughout the British Empire on August 1st, 1834. Between 1628 and the early 1800s, approximately 3000 people of African origin came to Canada and most were held as slaves. In 1793, the Parliament of Upper Canada (now Ontario) passed the first act to limit slavery in the British Empire. Ontario became a destination for those fleeing slavery in the United States via the "underground railroad." Finally the British Parliament's Emancipation Act abolished slavery in all parts of the Empire in 1834. The Freedom Train Ride is a celebration to acknowledge the long struggle for racial justice in our province.



Indigenous & Workers of Colour Conference 2018

Travelling from as far as Sault Ste Marie, London and Montreal, union workers came together for the Labour Council's annual Indigenous and Workers of Colour Conference on June 16, 2018. The conference theme was "Decolonizing Corridors of Power, Privilege & Politics" and for the second time IBEW Local 353 was the location host opening their training centre to accommodate over 200 conference attendees.



The Conference was chaired by Equity Committee co-chairs Joy Davis and Mark Brown and opened by John Cartwright, Labour Council President. Cartwright spoke about the need for unions to commit to increasing diversity amongst their leadership and staff, and to ensure that doors are open to workers of colour to access good jobs.

A powerful panel entitled "#MeToo: A racialized & indigenous perspective" was anchored by Maggie Cywink, provincial advisor on the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry, ACTRA lawyer Victoria Shen and Andria Babbington of UNITEHERE Local 75. The panel was facilitated by Equity Committee member Danica Izzard from OSSTF Toronto.

The morning keynote was delivered by Hamilton City Councillor Matthew

Green, who narrated a powerful story of the racist incidents he experienced in his home town, starting with childhood and culminating in a recent profiling by police as he waited for a bus in his own neighbourhood. He succinctly connected issues of race and class in calling for a movement to build social and economic justice.

The afternoon keynote was by Federal NDP leader Jagmeet Singh who spoke of his own journey to becoming a leader of a national political party. The conference attendees lined up patiently to ask questions on a wide variety of issues covering the Truth & Reconciliation Commission, the NDP's commitment to climate action and strategies to address systemic racism.

Following the keynote, the participants had their choice of workshops covering a wide range of topics. Some of the workshops

were presented by representatives of OPSEU's Indigenous Circle, Asian Canadian Labour Alliance (ACLA), Canadian Black Trade Unionists (CBTU). Workshops were titled We are the Union, Municipal Elections from a Racialized and Indigenous Perspective, Building Allyship, Addressing Systemic Racism in the Labour Movement and Indigenous Realities.

The conference theme of "Decolonizing Corridors of Power, Privilege & Politics" was chosen to recognize the need to build effective solidarity in the labour movement, to create activists and leaders who will challenge the rising tide of hate and conservative politics that undermines worker rights. The response in registration and full participation on the day is clear indication that union members from diverse sectors are committed to building a strong and vibrant labour movement.

TRADELINX: Opening Doors To Good Jobs

Before she started her construction training, Laura was working as a cleaner and responsible for looking after her younger sibling. She had a driver's license but no car. At the training course she is taking now, she finds the pace of the lessons is easy to follow and is planning her future. At 21, Laura has a clear goal – she wants to become a drywall finisher and member of the Painters Union.



Eighteen year old Abdinassir was waking up every day to play video games. He has Grade 10 education but got drawn into the youth justice system. After starting the pre-apprenticeship program he is enjoying the hands-on work. He also finds the math skills much easier

to come by than when he was in high school. He has also decided he wants to do drywall finishing. Construction Craft Worker is his second choice.

Both of these TradeLinx participants will finish their 12 week pre-apprentice training at the beginning of August, and move into further training as a union apprentice. They will join over a hundred other graduates of the program since the Labour Education Centre (a project of the Toronto & York Region Labour Council) founded the program in 2015. The placement rate of TradeLinx participants in the unionized trades is over 90%

LEC started the program (then called I'm Eglinton) to provide an entry into the trades for diverse youth facing barriers to employment. Many have gone on to work in residential or ICI construction, and some on the Eglinton Crosstown Light Rail Transit line. Work on the line has come under the auspices of the Community Benefit Framework negotiated with Metrolinx by the Toronto Community Benefits Network.

TradeLinx is funded by the City of Toronto Employment and Social Services. The United Ways' Career Navigator provides addition staffing to provide wrap around supports for participants during the program as well as after. Curriculum includes essential job skills, math with hands-on training that includes certifications through the Workers Health and Safety Centre, and some on-site experience. Each class visits trades training centres to help them understand the depth of union provided training.

Hello!? Can Anybody Help Me?

The Toronto Public Library (TPL) is conducting a pilot project to “test” the idea of staffless libraries. The idea is to extend open hours of many, if not all, 100 library branches in Toronto. The test begins early September at two of TPL's smallest branches, Todmorden and Swansea. If “successful,” (as determined by TPL management), the project will be expanded system wide.

During the new open hours, there will be no library workers onsite to assist patrons and safeguard library assets. In response, the union, the Toronto Public Library Workers' Union (TPLWU, CUPE 4948), is planning a public education campaign highlighting the problems with shedding library workers, despite the rapidly growing demand for the services they provide.

TPLWU President, Brendan Haley, has worked for TPL over 40 years and knows every nook and cranny of the Toronto library system, which is widely regarded as one on the

world's best. Haley is alarmed by the potentially unintended consequences of unsupervised access to public assets, worth hundreds of millions of dollars, not to mention the personal safety of users, particularly students and seniors.

“So many things could go wrong in a staffless library,” says Haley. “We have problems even when there is staff on duty - problems with theft, harassment, and disputes among patrons. On top of this, there is an increasing demand by patrons for the information and advice that library workers are uniquely qualified to give.”

Several libraries in the United States and Europe have been experimenting with staffless

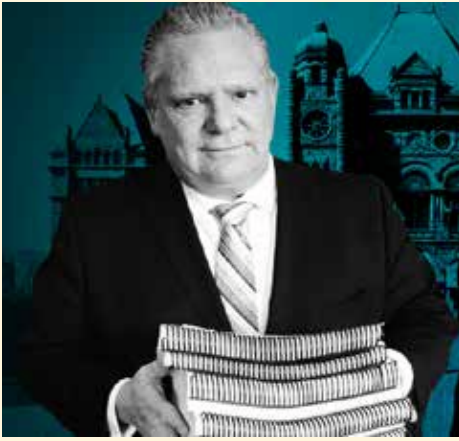
libraries. But guarding against problems such as drug use, patron safety and others has proven to be costly.

“When two people start arguing about who has the right to use one of the library's computers, who's going to intervene? If someone is hurt, how long will it take for someone to notice and get help?”

Stay tuned for news on the union campaign and how you can help prevent this attack on one of Toronto's most popular, and important public services.



THE ABUSE OF POWER BEGINS



Premier Ford's bombshell announcement that he will hijack the Toronto election and unilaterally slash Council representation is a deeply disturbing indication of how Ontario will be run over the next four years.

With no notice and no consultation, Doug Ford has decided to cut the Council to 25 seats from the current number of 47. If he applied the same formula of one Councillor per provincial riding elsewhere, city councils would be obliterated. But these deep cut are only aimed at Toronto. In York Region, Peel, Niagara and Muskoka, he is cancelling the direct elections of the Council Chairs – the most powerful politician in each Region.

A politician interfering in elections that are already underway is unprecedented in Canadian history. It shows the same contempt for democracy that marked the Mike Harris regime the last time

Conservatives ran the province. This move is driven not by a pursuit of savings. It is about restoring backroom deals by wealthy powerbrokers - reducing accountability so they can profit from the resources of our cities. Behind it will be a drive to privatize services and sell off public assets.

And so the abuse of power begins.

Nobody should believe that the Conservatives will stop at Bill 5 – and no one knows who will be the next target. Within hours they announced cuts to social assistance rates and an abrupt end to the pilot project on minimum income. We are seeing how a Trump-style leadership would operate – with complete disregard for justice. Whether it is around schools, healthcare, pensions or labour rights - it is guaranteed that in the next four years all of us will find ourselves in a fight, defending things we have assumed were secure and fair.

The people of Toronto saw nothing but chaos and global ridicule when

the Fords ran City Hall. They scrapped transit plans and cut services, outsourced jobs and targeted libraries for closure. We now see how that same chaos will be imposed from Doug Ford at Queen's Park. Ford ran and lost his bid to be Mayor. For many this surprise attack smacks of a revenge agenda on Toronto progressives as well as key opponents like Patrick Brown. Without malice as the motive, any politician acting with integrity would take time to consult the people and change the boundaries for the next election.

Last time the Conservatives took over this province they dumped billions of costs on the property taxpayers. It took years to recover – in fact we are still paying for those destructive decisions that were masked by simple slogans and mean-spirited ideology. Crumbling schools, cancelled transit lines, increased poverty and boarded up housing are the legacy of that experience. We cannot afford four more years of chaos in Toronto or Ontario.

