

WINTER | 2023

LABOUR ACTION

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TORONTO & YORK REGION
COUNCIL



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— YEAR OF THE —

UNION





Message from the President

Dear Comrades, Sisters, Brothers,

2023 is the year of the union. Despite hardships and struggles caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we stood strong together last year, rallying and supporting each other and standing up against hate. Our ACTIONS were powerful displays of unity and solidarity. Visit our YouTube channel to watch our 2022 video.

As we enter 2023, my heart swells with excitement at the thought of continuing to fight for progress and a better future for all workers. To win, we must fight together.

One of the most significant victories in 2022 was the repeal of Bill 28. This undemocratic legislation imposed a four-year contract on education workers and removed their right to strike. The repeal of this Bill resulted from tireless efforts of workers, our affiliates, and our allies. Please see page 15 to read more on this education fight.

Our Labour Council works actively to strengthen our democracy and empower our communities. A highlight of 2022 was Toronto's municipal election. We saw an increased number of racialized candidates emerge victorious in the elections. Because our endorsed candidates are bringing positive changes to our city, Premier Ford imposed super-mayor powers in Toronto.

The implications of the mayor's strong budget powers and veto rights are sharper with the revelations of John Tory's affair, its workplace setting, and the subsequent notice he would resign. He stayed to force his 2023 budget through without clarifying his intentions, further eroding our local democracy. Pages 3 and 4 cover the budget and our call for progressive leadership in the mayor's office at the June 26th By-election.

Families are trying to keep their heads above water. Rising expenses, the housing crisis, a failing care system, Bill 124, a frayed social safety net, a pressing climate emergency, and low taxes for the rich, put families' livelihoods and access to necessities at risk. Join the OFL's Enough is Enough campaign to fight on these issues. Sign up at wesayenough.ca. Read pages 12-13 of this Labour Action about the healthcare crisis. Go to page 19 to see how Labour is helping shape climate action.

Along with the affordability crisis, Ford undermines us by giving his business buddies what they want and taking power away from others. Throughout this issue of Labour Action you can read about the giveaways in Bill 23 and the strong mayor powers in Bill 39, to see how the dots connect.

Last year, the so-called Freedom Convoy occupied Ottawa and tried to take over streets in Toronto and other communities. Some participants were frustrated working people who we need to win back, but others were white supremacists and far right groups manipulating workers' anxieties to create a deeply troubling situation in this country. As part of Community Solidarity Toronto, Labour peacefully challenged those who stirred up hate and division. Linda McQuaig's Toronto Star article on page 17 is a must-read about right-wing politicians stoking these divisions while offering no solutions.

In 2023, one of our main priorities is to continue organizing and mobilizing. With a larger stronger base, we'll be better equipped to advocate for workers' rights with loud and proud voices. This means always being aware that workers are not just the job they do but the communities they live in. We will not rest until we have – together – secured better living and working conditions for all!

Solidarity,

Andria Bobbitt

President

By-election on June 26 – A Call for Progressive Leadership in the Mayor's Office

Statement on the Resignation of John Tory as Mayor

In light of the February 10 revelations about John Tory's affair, its workplace setting, and his subsequent resignation, the Toronto & York Region Labour Council issued the following statement on Monday, February 13:

Toronto badly needs stable, democratic, and progressive leadership—right now. In the last four months, the introduction of extra-strong mayor powers at John Tory's request has had a destabilizing effect on City Council as an institution. The centralization of power in the mayor's office has wreaked havoc on the City Budget process and, particularly, on the community's ability to participate meaningfully.

Meanwhile, Toronto is experiencing multiple emergencies that need urgent attention: the shelter access and housing affordability crisis, the public safety crisis, and the climate crisis, to name the most prominent. These issues will not wait for this political crisis to be resolved.

The Labour Council calls on John Tory to formally resign his office immediately, and for Council to initiate steps towards a by-election as soon as possible. Let's get back to

democratic governance. That means open, fair, and timely elections. It means transparent and appropriate distribution of electoral power. It means respect for majority votes.

Working people are feeling squeezed right now. They want leadership they can trust to make Toronto a livable city for all. They want to know that they can get to work and school safely, that child care and recreation will be available when they need it, that Toronto's deterioration can be reversed, that they can enjoy the pleasures of life in a big city, regardless of their household income. The Labour Council will continue to press all municipal leaders and aspiring leaders to commit to progressive solutions for these issues through transparent, democratic governance at City Hall.

John Tory submitted his resignation after passage of his budget on February 15th and left office on February 17th.

Our Chance

Torontonians don't have time for mayors who play political football with housing and shelter, community safety, equity, or climate action. In the coming June 26th mayoral election, Labour Council will advocate for the city we all want and need.

Here's something we didn't have on our 2023 bingo card: a mayoral by-election in Toronto! This is an unprecedented moment. Electing a mayor who will work for—and with—working people is within reach.

We've been governed by right wing mayors for more than 12 years. We are done with mayors who will say YES to Doug Ford and big business but NO to regular people. It's time for a change.

We're looking for a leader who will deeply value the lived experiences and inputs of working people, including respect for unions. To be a great city, Toronto's future success must rest on a strong foundation of public services, affordable housing, accessible public transit, and good jobs.

The next mayor of Toronto must be willing to confront the challenges of our time – racial, social, economic, and climate injustices – with solutions that tackle these challenges from the root.

We need a leader who will be a credit to our city, who is for and of working people, and who will act quickly to implement smart, progressive policy changes. We need a person who can lead the city on the difficult conversations that have been pushed under the political rug because the solutions may be uncomfortable for some. This includes how we pay for the city we need.

John Tory has not been that leader for Toronto. This Labour Council looks forward to active engagement in electing an

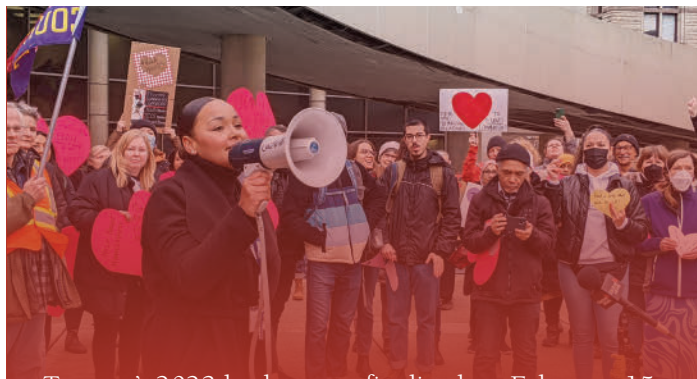
appropriate, progressive new mayor who will serve our city with respect for community and for a strong democracy.

Labour Council goes through a rigorous process to decide how and whether to endorse candidates for any municipal office. This is premised on the establishment of a cross-sectoral Election Planning Committee, made up of locals connected with the City. The EPC's recommendations pass through both the Executive Board and the full Labour Council before becoming final.

We have a strong set of criteria to measure candidates against: Where do they stand on community benefits, employment lands, quality public services, contracting out, the mayoral veto and one-third vote loophole, along with other issues touched on here.

We will advocate for leadership at City Hall that inspires people of all walks of life to step up and engage in building a livable city for all, serving every neighbourhood, and creating good jobs in a sustainable economy in which every Torontonians can thrive.

Working people can shape the vision for this city in this election.



Toronto's 2023 budget was finalized on February 15, and despite the short timeline and strange circumstances, Labour Council was able to work closely with other community organizations to advocate for a fairer, safer city. This photo depicts the Have A Heart rally that Labour Council anchored and which was co-sponsored by a dozen of our community partners.

Together, we successfully kept the spotlight on key issues that created space for progressive councillors to move important amendments in Council. The final budget still doesn't come close to meeting the needs of Torontonians—and especially the most vulnerable among us. However, we saw \$7 million in additional funds for a 24/7 warming centre, community programs, and more in the final result.

DEAR CITY COUNCIL, HAVE A HEART!

CITY BUDGET RALLY

- Bring heart-shaped signs with messages for Council
- Write and post a heart-shaped note
- Stay warm with some hot chocolate

15 FEB
9-10 AM

IN FRONT OF CITY HALL MAIN DOORS

100 QUEEN ST W
NATHAN PHILLIPS SQUARE

#HaveAHeartTO



Photos taken at the #HaveAHeartTO rally at City Hall on February 15th, right after Valentine's Day. Hundreds of residents attended the event to express the urgency of addressing housing, transit, public services, and other issues in the city's budget decisions, and to call on our decision makers to have a heart. We won't back down until our demands are met!

The Troubled Future of Toronto's Eglinton Crosstown LRT - The Dangers of Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) in Transit

Cost Overruns, Delays, and Community Impacts – Private Profit at Public Expense

The Eglinton Crosstown light rail transit line (LRT) is one of the most anticipated infrastructure projects in Toronto, but a recently-leaked Metrolinx communication has left the public with more questions than answers about the project's completion date. The project, which was initially slated to open in 2020, has faced numerous challenges, including cost overruns and delays, lack of transparency, and impacts on Black and racialized communities.



2022	Phil Verster	\$851,867.19
2021	Phil Verster	\$754,950.89
2020	Phil Verster	\$520,543.59
2019	Phil Verster	\$518,855.70
2018	Phil Verster	\$104,576.50

The CEO of Metrolinx, Phil Verster, has really seen his salary grow since Doug Ford became premier.
*Graphic and caption from Jenny Lee Shee on Twitter. @jennyleeshee



Transparency and accountability concerns with public-private partnerships are not new. The Confederation Line LRT in Ottawa, for example, has faced several scandals, including two derailments, a lawsuit, and a public inquiry that found private companies gave the city inaccurate completion dates and that the partnership between the city and private companies was “dysfunctional.” Some of the same companies involved in the Ottawa project have a 30-year maintenance contract for Toronto's Crosstown LRT, which is worrying.

The Crosstown LRT is a provincial project, but the city of Toronto has been left to come up with the resources to operate it, stretching the TTC's already underfunded budget. The 2023 TTC budget contains cuts, including a 9% reduction in overall service and a 25% reduction in subway service compared to pre-pandemic levels, partly because the budget will be stretched to operate the new Crosstown and Finch West LRTs. The solution to this problem is permanent transit operations funding from the provincial and federal governments.

Why did the TTC stop building rapid transit themselves? Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario took over the Spadina subway extension from the TTC after cost overruns. But research by Stephen Wickens shows that the per-kilometre cost of some projects

under Infrastructure Ontario have more than doubled.

One of the arguments for public-private partnerships is that they will transfer “risk” onto the private sector. In other words, if there are cost overruns or delays, the private sector is responsible. But this myth has been shattered by the legal settlements that have seen Metrolinx make multiple payments to the consortium building the Eglinton Crosstown to resolve delays. In 2014, Ontario's Auditor General found that P3 projects cost the province \$8 billion more than if they had been procured publicly.

When P3s win contracts to maintain transit lines, good public sector jobs can be outsourced to for-profit operators.

The Crosstown LRT project has also had a significant impact on Black and racialized communities, particularly in Little Jamaica, where Black-owned businesses have been displaced and skyrocketing property values are resulting in tenant and community displacement. Cheryll Case calls this process “transit-oriented displacement,” which is a form of privatizing public investment.

With no confirmed opening date, cost overruns and delays, lack of transparency, impacts on Black and racialized communities, where is the accountability?

Author: Shelagh Pizey-Allen, Executive Director of TTCriders.

Labour Leads Sea Change on Toronto Council

Elections are political bargaining. During municipal elections, we can impact the government that's closest to the people. In 2022, local unions worked together with the Labour Council to create a sea change at City Hall.

Early in 2022, Labour Council established three strategic goals for the municipal election. We would gear our efforts towards keeping progressive-held seats; work to gain new labour-friendly seats; and build power toward future gains, within labour and by building up local capacity. In a year full of surprises, difficult losses provincially, and challenges within our movement, we were able to contribute to several important wins and successfully hit all of our strategic goals.

Keep the progressive seats

This goal proved challenging, as the target number of "maintain" seats grew through the year. With heavy-hitter progressive councillors Joe Cressy, Kristyn Wong-Tam, Ana Bailão, and Mike Layton stepping down, there was a big hole to fill in the downtown core. Labour Council endorsed Ausma Malik in Spadina-Fort York, Chris Moise in Toronto Centre, Alejandra Bravo, and Norm Di Pasquale in University-Rosedale. Malik, Bravo, and Moise all won their seats handily, while Di Pasquale lost to Dianne Saxe by just 123 votes.

We contributed to re-electing veteran progressive councillors Gord Perks (Parkdale-High Park), Anthony Perruzza (Humber River-Black Creek), Paula Fletcher (Toronto-Danforth), and Shelley Carroll (Don Valley North).

Gain new labour-friendly seats

City Council has gained two young, progressive, Black voices. Amber Morley, a second-time candidate against developer-friendly incumbent Mark Grimes, won a decisive victory in Etobicoke-Lakeshore. In Scarborough-North, first-time candidate Jamaal Myers rose to the top after incumbent councillor Cynthia Lai passed away unexpectedly.

These gains are significant in terms of voting power and representation on council. Myers' and Morley's determination to bring better service and engagement to their suburban wards will have a lasting impact.

Build power

Four labour-endorsed candidates set out to challenge conservatives in non-traditional wards. Charles Ozzoude, a health equity champion who is a young Black immigrant, ran in Etobicoke North. Second-time York South-Weston challenger Chiara Padovani lost a fierce battle against Frances Nunziata by only 94 votes. CUPE 4400 member and affordable housing advocate David Ricci challenged Jaye Robinson in Don Valley West, while community leader Stephen Ksiazek went up against former cop Jon Burnside in Don Valley East.

It is important for labour to make its presence felt in areas of the city where conservatives have deep roots. The Padovani campaign's near-miss is a lesson for all of us: **non-voters become voters when they believe they have the power to make change.**

Workers stepped into their power as voters and as campaign volunteers throughout the election period. In June, labour and community activists attended the Labour Council's Political Action Conference to gain skills for elections and beyond. We also hosted candidate meet-and-greets, labour canvasses, and boosted other opportunities to get involved.

Success at the Toronto District School Board

At the TDSB, labour-endorsed candidates were elected in traditionally progressive-held wards. These include re-elections for James Li (Ward 13), Zakir Patel (Ward 19), Manna Wong (Ward 20), and Yalini Rajakulasingam (Ward 21). Newcomers Debbie King (Ward 7), Alexis Dawson (Ward 9), Deborah Williams (Ward 10), and Sara Ehrhardt (Ward 15) took up the mantle from outgoing progressive trustees. And Matias De Dovitiis (Ward 4) and Neethan Shan (Ward 17) trailblazed new labour-friendly seats in suburban wards.

Thank you to all our endorsed candidates who fought their campaigns with integrity and grit. Much credit is due to the many unions and labour advocates who put effort into raising awareness of the election and labour-endorsed candidates, and to every working person who made an effort to vote.

Toronto City Budget 2023 and Impacts of the “Strong-Mayor” Powers



"Our endorsed candidates are on their way to bringing positive changes to our communities. Because of this, Premier Ford imposed super-mayor powers in Toronto."

See pages 8-9 for analysis of Bill 39.

Just after the municipal election, Ford bestowed Toronto's mayor with additional powers (Bill 39), which diminished the democratic processes and powers of local councillors. Labour Council has been closely monitoring and speaking out on this further hit to local democracy. We continue to press for better funding of city services.

Until recently, Toronto's budget process was three months long. Councillors and members of the public could review city staff's proposals, provide input, and advocate for changes. Under the new legislation, the budget period is just five weeks long, and the mayor has authority not only to write his own budget but also to override a majority of council with just eight supporting votes.

The choices the city government makes each year are not only a reflection of the context of our city; they actively shape our context for years to come.

This budget was always going to be about making tough choices. Unfortunately, we're getting:

- Higher taxes and fees for less service — especially on the TTC;
- Crumbling infrastructure;
- Minimal enhancements for the Poverty Reduction Strategy;
- Little attention to equity and anti-racism, after marginalized communities bore the brunt of COVID;
- Prioritization of policing;
- Low to no new commitments toward TransformTO goals, despite the massive fight ahead of us.

Pay more, get less.

Labour Council is concerned about how city jobs are used as a tool to balance the budget. Over 4,000 staff jobs are still unfilled; that means a 10% cut in service, maintenance, and program work.

TTC service is set for a 9% reduction. That's 457 transit operator jobs, a rush-hour crush, and off-peak delays that will push riders away from public transit in a time when ridership levels must be recovered.

We're concerned about creeping privatization and "alternative financing" schemes that are already damaging Toronto's commitment to being a good employer.

We want working people and their families to continue to live, work, and play, right here.

For years, city budgets have been treated like a relay race with a stick of dynamite: rush to the next marker and pass that baton before you get burned. Do nothing to put out the flame or prevent impending disaster. Instead, let's view it as the tending of a perennial garden. The better we take care of Toronto—its infrastructure, its services, and ultimately, its people—the better it will take care of us.



Labour Council Poll Finds Even the Wealthiest Agree:

Invest in Better Community Services Now, and Tax the Rich To Do It

As part of our election campaign work last fall, Labour Council commissioned a poll of over 2,500 Torontonians in all parts of the city. The results showed that Torontonians of all income levels want a more liveable city now—even if it means a small increase in property taxes on the wealthiest homes.

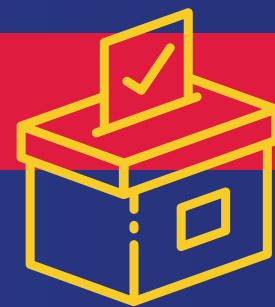
We are seeing social unity when 73% in the highest income bracket agree to pay more in order to invest in the community. In fact, 72% of all surveyed—and over 73% of those in the highest income bracket (households with incomes above \$150,000)—aligned with the statement “Toronto should invest now to improve public and community services like recreation, roads, transit, bike lanes, affordable housing, and public health, even if it means a small increase in property taxes for homes valued at over \$2.5 million.”

It was inspiring to see widespread support for initiatives we have been advocating over many years. These include strong backing for supportive and affordable homes; increasing protections for renters to reduce evictions; good local jobs for racialized communities through Community Benefits Agreements; improved frequency and reliability of the TTC; and redirecting responsibility for non-violent mental health and overdose response from police to other city services.

These results represent a huge win for our collective efforts to advocate on behalf of workers and their families. We have successfully created a sea change in public opinion when it comes to local solutions to problems impacting everyday people.

This poll was funded in partnership with CUPE 79, ATU 113, IBEW 353, TPFFA, OPSEU Region 5, and CUPE Ontario. The survey was designed in consultation with Earncliffe Strategies with fieldwork conducted by Léger. Labour Council and the Broadbent Institute conducted the analysis.

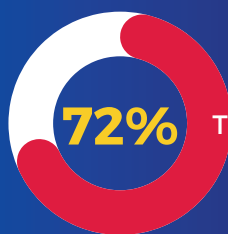
What Torontonians Want from City Council



According to new research representing 2,500+ respondents city-wide, Torontonians are united behind progressive, publicly-funded and delivered solutions to housing, equity, climate change, and accountability

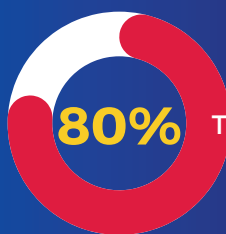
labourcouncil.ca/municipal2022

Invest now in public services, even if homes over \$2.5 M must pay a little more



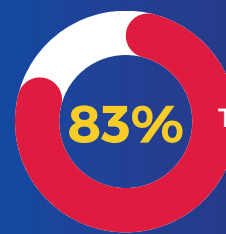
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City Council should address the high cost of housing



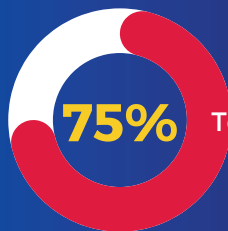
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Increase the frequency and reliability of TTC services



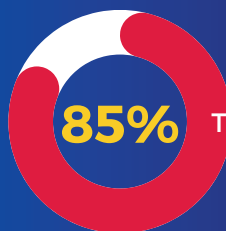
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Increase protections for renters to reduce evictions



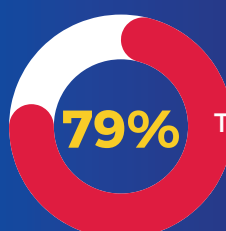
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Ensure major public infrastructure projects include Community Benefits Agreements



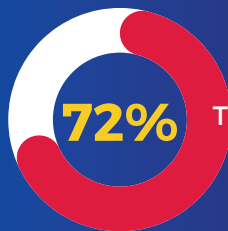
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Improve availability & access to parks and recreation services



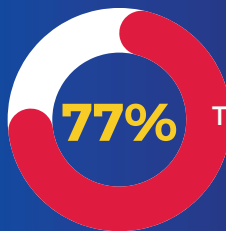
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Toronto should purchase property to provide community and supportive housing



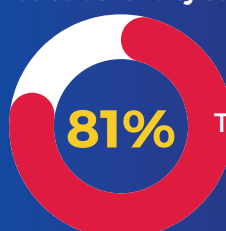
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Increase housing density and require developers to include more affordable units



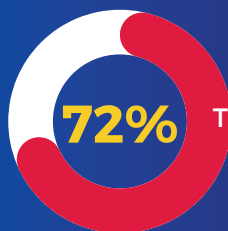
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Redirect non-violent mental health and overdose response from police to other city services



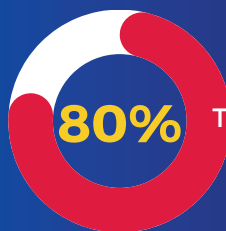
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Invest now in public infrastructure to withstand climate change



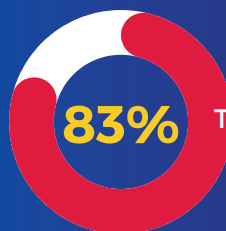
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Get developer money out of City elections



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support

Improve the capacity of emergency services like EMS and fire



of
Torontonians
agree

Follow the Money:

Who Profits from Bill 23 and Bill 39?

Looking at recent controversial legislation from 2022 - Bill 23 (More Homes Built Faster Act) and Bill 39 (Better Municipal Governance Act) - here is a list of winners and losers:

WINNERS	LOSERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land speculators and developers who will make a super-profit from their recent purchase of previously-undevelopable Greenbelt lands; • Developers who no longer need to pay development charges or build according to municipal green building standards; • Landlords who can “demovict” tenants and charge future tenants whatever rent they want; • Politicians who receive donations from wealthy developers and landlords 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our environment, when climate change is worsened by Greenbelt reductions and loss of energy efficiency building standards; • Our cities, which will lack the development charge revenues they need to fund new infrastructure that development and growth require; • Tenants, who can expect higher rents and fewer rights to remain in their homes; • Those in desperate need of affordable housing; • Anyone who believes in democracy and accountability 

Environmental Defense, the ONDP, and others are calling for the OPP to investigate whether developers were tipped off in advance about the Greenbelt becoming open for development. It is difficult to fathom a need for a move that experts agree is going to have a devastating environmental impact on Ontario's watersheds and wetlands, is unnecessary for building housing, and breaks a BIG promise from Ford not to touch the Greenbelt- unless the only real goal was to reward a few of Ford's developer friends. If so, Bill 23 might actually be criminal as well as unethical.

Less obvious is that Bill 23 and 39 could also indirectly bring huge benefits to corporations that thirst for private profits at public expense. And the destruction of the public good goes even further with Bill 39: the Province recently granted Toronto's mayor super strong-mayor powers, at John Tory's request. He can use these undemocratic powers to ram through municipal laws that align with the following two Conservative priorities with the support of a mere one-third of City Council:

1. Building 1.5 million new residential units by end of 2031; and
2. Constructing and maintaining infrastructure to support housing, including transit, roads, utilities, and servicing

These priorities can be deceiving: Who could oppose new housing or its supporting infrastructure? More housing, and

especially more affordable housing, is absolutely essential. However, experts agree that there are many other non-Greenbelt options for the building of housing. **But Bills 23 and 39 threaten to actually UNDERMINE the availability of affordable housing.** Imagine if Tory makes that worse by using his undemocratic powers to sell off Toronto Community Housing units or offer city lands to wealthy developers at cut-rate prices, with no strings attached.

The infrastructure category also allows for very broad interpretation. Tory could privatize big swaths of the TTC to reduce wages and costs to say that he was expanding transit service. Remember Doug Ford's plans in 2018 to upload and privatize Toronto's subway system? Or Tory and Ford could use more P3s (public-private partnerships) to build transit and maintain it without thought to the current debacle of the over-budget, behind-schedule Eglinton Crosstown.

These bills are bad for people and bad for our cities and municipalities. They are part of a bigger package of planned neglect and outright attacks on our communities and cities. They have interfered with York Region's democratic process and taken away municipalities' ability to charge development fees to build the infrastructure that they need to accommodate growth caused by the development.

According to Town of Aurora's Mayor Tom Mrakas' Twitter, when he discussed the York Region budget, there is an “early



estimate on the shortfall York Region could see due to the impacts of Bill 23 is 497M to 1.5B over 10 years. The impact to taxpayers across the region will be significant.”

The result of these bills is that we will NOT have more affordable housing, but we WILL have more money in the hands of wealthy developers, and the risk of more privatization and contracting out related to infrastructure in Toronto and in York Region.

The existence of Bill 39 demonstrates the might of the left in creating change through democratic elections, and is a result of Ford's and Tory's fear of our collective power. Tory “needed” Bill 39 because he could see he was losing his grip on Council with the election of so many diverse progressive Councillors in the Fall of 2022, including in the suburbs. These progressives are ready to do the right thing and act with integrity on behalf of ALL Torontonians, adding their strength to the existing progressives who are skilled at navigating City Hall.

Cities need help from both the provincial and federal governments just to make up for existing billion dollar gaps for basic services and programs. We also need more financial help to fund the additional infrastructure, services and programs which everyone recognizes are needed to actually deliver a livable city / municipalities for everyone. We have to push back against the austerity that continues to be preached. We have to push back against the privatization and sell-off we can expect when we run out of money because we can't fund the cities we need.

People power and union power is the most effective way to push back against these reckless bills. Working people need to see themselves as the direct winners in this equation, not wealthy developers and P3 consortiums. We must continue to fight and shame Ford and Tory and their wealthy donor friends. Let's focus on a vision of what we need in Toronto and York Region, and allow those needs to drive the fiscal and decision-making framework! We need affordable housing, safe communities, strong and ambitious climate action, high quality equitable public services, accountability, and democracy.

The Labour Council will

- Call on John Tory and all Toronto City Councillors to NOT use Bill 39 powers;
- Call on Toronto City Council to prioritize more deeply affordable housing, building on intensification through lens of right to adequate housing;
- Support calls for an inquiry into Bill 23 and whether some developers purchased land based on insider information;
- Call on ALL our affiliates to speak out against Bill 23 and Bill 39 because they affect ALL of us;
- Ask all unions to expose the inherent risks of the second provincial priority for municipal services (allowing one-third of City Council to pass bylaws about “constructing and maintaining infrastructure to support housing, including transit, roads, utilities, and servicing”);
- Build out a four-year Toronto City Hall strategy, including supporting newly-elected progressive councillors, building on the labour partnership with the progressive wing of Council, and establishing a public-facing municipal campaign for a fair deal for cities that centers workers and community;
- Fight for fair 2023 budgets that move beyond austerity in Toronto and York Region by working strategically with community allies;
- Call for an immediate independent third party review of the Eglinton Crosstown P3 with respect to the ongoing delays and increased costs.

The Crisis in Our Health Care "System"



"Public health care is the goal -- just as public education is the goal when it comes to education -- because these two public systems organize vital parts of our lives around the profoundly important principles of equality and accessibility for all."

— Linda McQuaig

For the first couple of years of COVID, the pandemic shone a light on the huge gaps in our health care system and, in turn, on the sacrifices health care workers made to try and keep it together. Now, instead of responding to those gaps, we are entering what looks like a new period of austerity which may bring public health care to a breaking point.

At the federal level, Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland is paving the way for austerity budgets. She spoke recently to multiple audiences about how her government must cut back on costs. After cutbacks, how will the Canada Health Transfer – already not keeping pace with patient need – provide what is necessary? Freeland also referenced the ongoing interest rate hikes imposed by the Bank of Canada as positive and necessary, even though workers know they can expect worse outcomes for themselves and their families and a greater likelihood of recession as a result.

In Ontario, Ford's Conservative government continues to cry poor, wielding huge legislative sticks to solve education, health and other problems in unhelpful ways. The erroneously named Bill 7, "More Beds, Better Care Act," is forcing seniors into low-standard for-profit long term care beds, hours from where their families live, in order to free up hospital beds. The recent "nuclear" use of the notwithstanding clause to impose a collective agreement on education workers is another example: what will they use to address health staffing problems? A quick glance at the Ontario Federation of Labour's Ford Tracker shows countless other illustrations of their support for profitable corporations and their contempt for public care.

Toronto's third term mayor won re-election in 2022 with only 29% of Torontonians casting a ballot. Despite this, John Tory has been given strong mayor powers, including the right to set the City's budget, and he has declared before even seeing what the needs might be that he will continue not to

raise taxes above inflation, even for the wealthiest property owners. There is a nearly one billion dollar hole in Toronto's budget. How is Toronto Public Health and municipal long term care going to fare under such constraints?

We can easily chronicle the patchwork that has been made of Ontario's health care system over successive Conservative and Liberal governments at all levels. It feels like the public health care system is on its last legs: closure of emergency rooms, overflow of pediatric emergency care to adult hospitals, nurses quitting in despair, other health care workers suffering from low and shrinking wages and the need to work multiple jobs, poor mental health among workers, long term care homes still in huge COVID outbreaks, delayed care and surgeries, expanding for-profit long term care, people on waiting lists for years to get a family doctor even in large urban centres, ill people encouraged to cover medical expenses on their credit cards, and more.

A strong public health care system needs support and participation by all levels of government: federal, provincial and municipal. Today, more than ever, we need leadership that is fearless and ambitious.

In the days ahead, watch for leadership by our major health care unions to address the human health resource crisis we are in and the treacherous privatization path we are currently on. We must all support their campaign which will put pressure on the government to collaborate with these knowledgeable unions and come up with much-needed healthcare system solutions.

Beware of Premiers Bearing Promises of a Quick Health Care Fix



Winston Churchill famously said, 'Never let a good crisis go to waste,' and clearly Premiers Doug Ford in Ontario and Danielle Smith in Alberta, took note. Both are seizing this crisis in our health care system to institute huge, ideologically motivated changes to health care delivery. They promise a quick fix, but what they really want is to privatize as much of the system as they can, ripping away at the bedrock of our public health care system.

Reports predict that this week Premier Doug Ford will propose a massive shift of tax dollars from public hospitals to private surgical and diagnostic clinics. Make no mistake, the increased use of for-profit clinics will mean two clear outcomes: first, it will result in less funding for our public health system; and second, it will make the current health care worker shortage even worse.

The reality is private facilities are more focused on maximizing their profits than maximizing positive patient outcomes. Even if these are single-payer health facilities, where you can use your health card, for-profit care means dollars siphoned away from public hospitals to private investors. We saw during the pandemic that for-profit long-term care homes saw higher mortality rates than those that were not-for-profit. Innovative ideas for improving health care delivery are welcome but moving towards a U.S. style for-profit care model won't benefit everyday people, but it will mean private investors are poised to make millions.

At the heart of the crisis facing the Canadian health care system right now is the critical shortage of workers, full stop. Health care employees who went above and beyond the entire pandemic are exhausted and fed up. Short-staffed facilities are clamoring to fill vacancies but it's hard to retain demoralized staff.

Recruiting a new generation of health care workers into workplaces facing this level of crisis is a monumental challenge. It will be made even harder if more health workers head for private surgical clinics and empty out our public hospitals. It's a simple question of math. One nurse removed from the public system and placed into a private facility won't be easily replaced. Just last week we learned from Ontario Nurses' Association interim president Bernie Robinson that Ontario's nurse-to-population ratio is the worst in Canada. The Ford government's bizarre suggestion that it would be the same staff working at the for-profit



clinics shows his government simply doesn't grasp the problem. Is the same nurse already being forced to work double shifts now expected to add a third or fourth shift at a private clinic?

Ford and other conservatives keep repeating the mantra that people just want better care and don't care how it is delivered. But people do care. Recent polling released by the Ontario Federation of Labour showed that 60 percent of Ontarians oppose private health care delivery. And this number will only grow when someone is rushed to the hospital for urgent care only to find the surgeon out moonlighting at a private clinic, padding the bank accounts of investors off quick and easy procedures.

We are seeing public health care failing across the country. But the solution isn't for-profit clinics taking money out of the public system. What we need is all levels of government to come together behind a plan to strengthen our public health care system, starting with addressing the critical shortage of health workers we are facing across the country.

Authors: Bea Bruske, President of the Canadian Labour Congress; Patty Coates, President of the Ontario Federation of Labour. Originally published on National Newswatch on Jan 15, 2023.

Honoring Black Contributions to the Labour Movement:

The Fight for Equity and Justice

As we celebrate Black History Month, it is important for the labour movement to acknowledge and honour the contributions of Black Canadians to our country's history, culture, and economy, if we are to achieve a truly equitable and fair society for all.

Throughout history, Black Canadians have played a vital role in fighting for fair wages, working conditions and advocating for social and economic justice.

This year, UFCW describes the barriers facing Black Porters in Canada as they fought for bargaining rights. CUPW highlights the contributions made by Black inventors and scientists. CUPE Ontario honours Dr. Jill Andrew, a Toronto MPP and education worker, teacher and author. The Carpenters, the Painters, the Plumbers among others are celebrating the achievements of the No. 2 Construction Battalion, the first and only all-Black battalion-sized unit in Canadian military history, as a way around racist practices in the First World War.

Despite progress, Black Canadians continue to face racism and barriers that limit their opportunities for education, employment, and social mobility. To address these issues, we encourage greater participation and support for organizations such as the Urban Alliance on Race Relations, Toronto Community Benefits Network (TCBN), Hammer Heads, and the Black Workers' Rights Information Clinic, which have played a significant role in helping Black workers to thrive and advocate for policies and programs that promote equity and inclusion.

The labour movement has a responsibility to address and dismantle systemic racism and discrimination that continues to affect Black communities. Last year our Labour Council marked its 150th anniversary by shining a light on the courageous stories of Black leaders who have fought against racism and discrimination. This year, we urge members to visit labourcouncil.ca/black_history_month_2023 for BHM events and actions. Together, we can build a stronger, more equitable labour movement for all.



Educate:

- Visit labour150.ca to read Profiles of Courage of Black trade unionists, including Brandon Haynes, pictured here
- Check out how your union commemorates Black History Month
- Visit Toronto's A Different Booklist to get excellent reading materials for people of all ages (online at adifferentbooklist.com)

Take Action:

- Celebrate Black History Month and the contributions of your union's Black members
- Sign the Charter of Inclusive Workplaces and Communities. Visit labourcouncil.ca/equity
- Adopt the Yes It Matters campaign. Visit labourcommunityservices.ca/yesitmatters

Bargaining and grievances:

- Take anti-Black racism complaints through the entire grievance process
- Bargain anti-racism language into your collective agreement
- Consider processes for member-to-member issues
- Consider including Black equity representatives on your bargaining committees

United We Stand:

The Defeat of Bill 28 and the Power of Collective Action in the Labour Movement

The defeat of Doug Ford's anti-worker Bill 28 is a significant victory for workers and labour unions in Ontario. It underscores the importance of political action and unions in shaping public policy and defending workers' rights.

Last November, Ford's government has once again shown its contempt for workers' rights with the passage of Bill 28, outrageous back-to-work legislation, which forced a four-year contract on 50,000 education workers and prohibited them from striking. The Ontario government invoked the notwithstanding clause in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms - for a second time - a move that raises important questions about the protection of workers' rights and the role of the government in shaping public policy.

The passing of Bill 28 incited a wave of passionate and powerful protests across the province. CUPE members, allies and labor unions came together to make their voices heard, rallying at Queen's Park, and at MPP constituency offices across the province. With remarkable speed, labour allies organized an emergency rally, a march to the legislature, and a blockade at Yonge and Dundas - all in a matter of days, showing their unwavering determination to fight for their rights. Unions from all over Canada pledged millions of dollars in support of the low-wage school support workers, showing that the fight for justice is not only for education workers but for all workers. It was not just a demonstration. It was a movement that will continue to grow stronger and more powerful until justice is served.

The tireless efforts of unions, workers and community partners to organize and mobilize their members, as well as the support of the broader labour movement, were instrumental in defeating this harmful legislation. The courage and determination of education workers, who stood up against Bill 28 and fought for their rights, strengthened the labour movement in Ontario. Their willingness to take action and speak out against the government's proposed changes has sent a clear message that workers will not stand idly by while their rights are taken away.

However, in the current economic and political climate, Ontario's education sector continues to be under-funded, making negotiations between teachers' unions and the

government difficult. Unions representing public school teachers are in talks for new collective agreements, but disagreements over class sizes, support for students with special needs, and compensation have made negotiations tense. And the Ford government continues to propagate its discourse within ethnic media, stating that education workers are overpaid and underworked. Unions also need to broaden their support from all communities, especially those in ethnic enclaves, to ensure that the public (not just the mainstream English-speaking public) are with them in this fight to defend and improve Ontario's education system!

The fight for publicly funded education (and for workers working in education) is far from over! There will always be those who seek to undermine workers' rights and the power of organized labour. The recent victory against Bill 28 is a significant step forward, but it is crucial that we continue to build on this momentum and stay vigilant against any further attempts to erode workers' rights. We must continue to educate and engage with the broader public, grow unionized jobs, and build a wider coalition of support for workers' rights and social justice. The labour movement will continue to stand in solidarity with all workers until they achieve the fair treatment they deserve.



LABOUR COMMUNITY ADVOCATE TRAINING PROGRAM – LEVEL 1

MARCH 22 – MAY 31, 2023



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The Labour Community Advocate Training Program is designed to build resilience, develop inclusivity, and train union members to become a valuable resource in the community.

Also focuses on helping Labour Community Advocates deal with equity, empowerment, solidarity, and building relationships within the union and affiliates.

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- Community Services
- Principles of Communication
- Stress: Causes & Impact
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- Tenant Issues
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In partnership with



Pierre Poilievre Offers the Disenfranchised His Anger, But No Solutions

TORONTO STAR

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre is hoping working people won't notice that he's not, in fact, offering them a return to economic security

Populist leaders who inspire their angry followers to storm the national capitol seem to be in vogue these days.

But if Canada is in search of such a strongman, it's not clear that Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre — or PP (as he's affectionately called) — really fits the bill, as some are now suggesting.

Donald Trump earned his strongman stripes building a crooked real estate empire in rough-and-tumble New York City, while Jair Bolsonaro developed his tough-guy habits as a captain in the Brazilian military (where he learned to express his manhood by declaring he'd rather find his son dead than dating someone with a moustache).

PP, on the other hand, acquired his street-fighting ways in the dark and savage jungle known as ... Canada's Parliament.

But while Poilievre's handlers may be trying to fine-tune his bio to increase his street cred, it might not matter to those angry men who are, after all, not the sharpest knives in the drawer. Indeed, perhaps the one thing that could be said about them is that they are, well, confused.

An insightful article in *The Walrus*, co-written by prominent pollster Frank Graves, describes how Poilievre is making gains among disaffected Canadian men — particularly young men — who “complain they have not seen the kind of progress their parents and grandparents did. Pensions and secure retirement are a mirage.”

These men are correct, and their anger at being left behind as the world economy zooms ahead is understandable, even poignant.

Where they get off course and start lapsing into loopy thinking is in their inability to grasp who's to blame for their predicament. And this is where a populist strongman can make hay. A strongman purports to be on their side, grasping their grievances and feeling their pain.

Typically, the strongman urges them to vent their rage by storming the seat of government or, in the Canadian version supported by Poilievre, parking in front of Parliament and clogging the surrounding streets with enormous trucks, hot tubs and bouncy castles.

Strongmen offer up a clear villain: government, or in Poilievre's words “this big beast called government.”

Government's evil is apparently perpetrated by all those who exercise its authority, notably public health officials trying to curb a pandemic.

Blaming government is a clever bait-and-switch, since the root grievance of the angry men is their economic insecurity.

And it wasn't government officials (or pointy-headed public health authorities) who made them economically insecure. The corporate world did that!

If pensions and secure retirement are a mirage today (which they are), it's because the cutthroat corporate world of recent decades stopped providing pensions to its employees.

The corporate world also pushed governments to adopt a whole range of pro-business policies that destroyed the earlier economic order based on the New Deal, under which economic rewards were distributed much more equitably.

Indeed, that New Deal order had treated the economic security of workers as vital — the very glue that made democracy work; if working people could achieve economic gains and financial security, they would value highly the democracy that delivered all that.

This has been stripped away over the past four decades as the corporate elite has managed to impose the new pro-business order, redirecting income and wealth to the top, slashing social supports and undermining the ability of the common people to achieve economic gains through unionizing.

This leaves today's uneducated workers with little hope of retiring comfortably or buying a house, as their uneducated parents and grandparents did.

No longer tethered to a democratic system that doesn't deliver as it used to, they become a volatile, malleable mass, susceptible to the snake oil of a wily strongman.

Poilievre is hoping working people won't notice that he's not, in fact, offering them a return to economic security.

But, what the hell, he's just as angry as they are! And he's delighted to champion them as they lash out at public health officials, blast the horns of their oversized trucks and frolic in steamy hot tubs in the public square.

Author: Linda McQuaig, a Toronto-based freelance contributing columnist for the Star. This article was originally published on Jan 12, 2023.

The More Homes Built Faster Act (Bill 23): A Threat to Affordable Housing in Cities



Last October, the Ford government announced the More Homes, Built Faster Act which claims to be among the “new solutions” in tackling the housing crisis. However, Ford is taking away the powers cities currently have to build any real affordable housing by overriding measures cities have/are undertaking to protect tenants from renovictions/demovictions and build/and protect existing affordable housing.

Building more unaffordable housing.

The Act aims to build 1.5 million homes in the next 10 years. However, building more unaffordable housing is not the solution to the housing crisis. Ontario needs affordable housing and not more of luxury condos.

Cities will have no power to build real affordable housing.

Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) allows cities to mandate a certain percentage of new developments to be set aside as affordable. Currently, cities have some powers to legislate their own IZ bylaws and build some real affordable housing. Now, this legislation goes a step further by taking away any powers cities have in drafting their IZ policies.

- **5% set aside rate for affordable housing units.** This is extremely low given the extent of the housing crisis. IZ has been implemented in several cities in Canada and the US, and studies show the best set-aside rates are 20-30%. ACORN members and allies won IZ bylaws in Toronto and Mississauga with set aside rates of up to 16% for affordable rental units and up to 22% for affordable ownership phased over the years.
- **The units will be kept affordable for a maximum of 25 years.** After 25 years, the affordable housing unit will return to the market, and the tenants will lose their affordable housing. For IZ policies to be effective, the IZ units need to be kept affordable forever. ACORN members and allies won these changes in Toronto and Mississauga, but those gains will be lost.
- **The definition of affordable housing will be based on 80% Average Market Rent (AMR).** CMHC defines housing as affordable only if the rent is no more than 30% of the household income. In today's rental market, 80% of AMR is NOT affordable. Toronto recently revised its definition of affordable housing, basing it on household income and not average market rent.

It will make tenants more vulnerable to renovictions/demovictions, increase homelessness crisis and destroy existing affordable housing by weakening or eliminating rental replacement bylaws across cities.

ACORN has been fighting in many cities such as Toronto, Ottawa and Hamilton where cities have already started drafting strong tenant relocation and anti-renoviction policies.

However, Doug Ford wants to take that power away from the cities. Building more energy-efficient, new housing at the cost of low- and moderate-income tenants is not a solution to the housing crisis. We can't meet carbon emission targets at the expense of low-income affordability!

Further, the Bill strips the tenants' right to return in case of demolition or conversion to condos. This is extremely disturbing since it will destroy existing affordable housing and accelerate evictions and the homelessness crisis.

As per the data by the City of Toronto, over the last five years, the City's rental replacement policy framework has secured the replacement and renewal of almost 2,200 existing private market rental units. The existing rental replacement policies act as a major deterrent for landlords to demolish apartment buildings, as this will require them to build replacement rental units. However, if Bill 23 is approved, these rental replacement policy frameworks will no longer exist.

Another thing this legislation proposes to do is exempt new developments, including affordable housing, from development charges. ACORN members are wary of this because, in the absence of these charges, costs for important services such as transit and other city services will not be met. In short, this proposed legislation undermines low and moderate-income tenants who are in desperate need of support.

Labour Role on Toronto's Climate Advisory Group and City Joint Implementation Team - A Journey to Net Zero



In October 2019, the Labour Council worked with our allies in and outside Toronto City Council to declare a climate emergency! We must tackle climate change.

Today I am proud to be one of 26 Toronto Climate Advisory Group (CAG) members helping the City implement its TransformTO Net Zero Strategy.

My interest in being on the CAG reflects the work that the Labour Council has been doing around climate justice for awhile. I wanted to bring labour's voice to the table as TransformTO takes on the next phase of ambitious climate action. COVID confirmed for us that governments hold a lot of power to address crises, especially when governments do that in collaboration with communities that will be affected by the crisis and who are knowledgeable about solutions.

Most of us want to pursue a just transition to a low-carbon future, and it is this lens I hope to bring to the work of the Climate Advisory Group.

I will use my personal experience organizing immigrant workers in the hospitality industry. We followed a "high road" approach, and prioritized decent work and respect for people's ability to provide quality service.

As a Black union leader and a parent, I know firsthand that people who are already marginalized are often left out of decisions that affect them. Nevertheless, I have seen regular people step up to challenges and advocate real solutions for and with their community.

As a climate champion in the labour movement, the Labour Council appreciates opportunities like the CAG to work collaboratively with community, environmental, and youth organizations to develop and achieve common purpose.

Lastly, labour is also on the Joint TransformTO Implementation Committee made up of city unions and city management. This Committee will collaboratively identify barriers and actions to help City operations and facilities reach Net Zero goals and targets.

Together, I hope we can effectively mobilize union members and leadership to take part in making this region a leader in climate action. I'll report back later on what the CAG and Joint Implementation Committee achieve.

Solidarity,

Andrea Bahbriff

President

OPSEU Local 546: Proud Members of the Labour Movement

OPSEU Local 546 safety inspectors ratified their first collective agreement with the TSSA on October 8th, 2022, after being forced out on an 11-week strike in July. This was a huge victory for Ontario's safety inspectors and for all working people in the province. If a government-established organization could bust a union, which workplace would be next? Worst of all, Premier Ford was pretending to be a friend of workers while undermining worker protection and public safety.

OPSEU's successful negotiation of a collective agreement reflects their organizing and commitment throughout the strike, despite having fewer than 200 Local 546 members across the province. Solidarity was actively demonstrated by union members across Ontario: a 13-foot inflatable rat, solidarity from teachers, transit workers, steelworkers, trades, and more, and thousands of petitions at the Labour Day Parade all helped secure this victory.

At a rally in front of Premier Ford's office, a Local 546 spokesperson told the crowd that their members now knew what it meant to be union members and part of the labour movement. Another OPSEU representative said at the Labour Council Delegates meeting in December: "Thank you to all who supported us during our difficult strike!"

ATU 1587 at GO and Metrolinx: We are "Stronger Together" !

Fired up by solidarity from OPSEU, CUPE Education Workers and others, members of ATU Local 1587 walked off the job in early November. After a four-day strike, the local reached an agreement with Metrolinx that addressed safety concerns and contracting out issues for their 2,200 GO station attendants, bus operators, maintenance workers, transit safety officers, and office professionals. The negotiations followed picket lines and a rally attended by more than 500 strikers, elected officials, and supporters outside the contract talks in downtown Toronto. After the rally, attendees escorted the negotiating team to the hotel room where talks with Metrolinx began. "Our members stood strong and united throughout this process. Metrolinx tried to divide us," said Local 1587 President Rob Cormier. "This strike shows that our members are willing to fight for justice. I want to thank the elected officials, allies, and our International for standing with us."



SEIU Healthcare at Kerry's Place – Fighting For Respect

Later in November, 128 Developmental Service Workers across the GTA went on strike after union attempts to improve care outcomes were repeatedly met with unsatisfactory offers by management of Kerry's Place. The union pointed out that individuals at Kerry's Place deserve exceptional care, but extremely long shifts leave staff exhausted and susceptible to preventable errors and physical injury, for which there is no WSIB coverage. Low wages, little attention to racism directed at the mostly Jamaican- and Nigerian-Canadian staff, and forcing staff to choose between paying bills or coming to work sick, led these workers to demand attention from Kerry's Place's CEO. Busloads of SEIU Healthcare nurses, solidarity pickets from other unions, and visits by family members of Kerry participants showed solidarity with the plight of low-paid workers fighting for respect. SEIU Healthcare workers quickly reached an agreement to return to the care work they are so dedicated to.

Support ACTRA Toronto's Fight Against Unlawful Lockout by Institute of Canadian Agencies

ACTRA Toronto continues to call for support in their fight against the unlawful lockout by the Institute of Canadian Agencies (ICA) since April 26th, 2022. The lockout came after failed negotiations and the ICA's announcement that they would allow advertising agencies to make non-union commercials. This is a direct attack on gig workers and the rights of artists.

As long as the lockout continues, ACTRA Toronto calls on the labor community to stand in solidarity with artists in their fight for fair and equitable wages. By doing so, the benefits for ACTRA members can be brought back. ACTRA Toronto welcomes support through their website at actra.ca/nca/solidarity-statements.





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01

The Affect & Effect
of Climate Change

02

Mitigation
and/or Adaptation

03

Just
Transition

04

Climate Justice
is Union Business

WORKING GREEN 2050

This workshop, consisting of 4 sessions, trains workers to be effective climate warriors, working in their unions and communities to fight climate change. Register now!

ABOUT WORKING GREEN 2050

Climate change is the major threat to the planet. Unions and their members must have the tools and knowledge to respond to climate change and help reduce the threat in our workplaces and communities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Steve Shallhorn
Executive Director
647-985-4480
wg2050@laboureducation.org



**Become a
Climate Warrior.**

Toronto Community Benefits Network wins Atkinson Good Fight Prize

TORONTO STAR



Toronto Community
Benefits Network

Grassroots organization began in 2013 as a coalition of labour and community groups advocating for the inclusion of communities affected most by the province's transit expansion plans

A Toronto-based grassroots organization advocating for marginalized communities to be involved in the city's major development projects has been awarded the Atkinson Good Fight Prize of \$80,000.

The Toronto Community Benefits Network was created in 2013 as a coalition of labour and community groups advocating for the inclusion of communities affected most by the province's transit expansion plans.

It's the second time the award has been given out by the Atkinson Foundation, a non-profit charitable organization promoting social and economic justice in Ontario.

"It's an incredible and unexpected recognition," Rosemarie Powell, the organization's executive director, told the Star in an interview.

"The Atkinson Foundation was there with us from Day 1 when the organization started and made a commitment to build our capacity, community benefits and outcomes. This keeps us motivated coming into our 10th year."

Among the projects the network is involved with is the Eglinton Crosstown and Finch West LRTs, the expanded Woodbine Casino in Rexdale and the West Park Healthcare Centre.

The organization advocates for job opportunities and training, community consultations and negotiating community benefit agreements, which are legally binding contracts that outline how local residents will benefit from new developments. The agreements could include adding green spaces and child care centres, as well as hiring workers from the surrounding neighbourhood.

For the West Park Healthcare Centre, a community benefits agreement was established to provide training and employment opportunities to historically marginalized communities during its construction.

It's an ongoing task that Powell said the network plans on continuing after seeing 2,000 people from under-represented groups get hired in technical, apprentice and

administrative jobs and \$17 million spent on getting local talent and labour.

The organization also works with other non-profits such as the Afro Canadian Contractors Association to increase the number of Black contractors and construction companies.

"With community benefit agreements, it empowers communities and groups to intervene in the planning and development process where they didn't usually have a voice," Powell said.

Powell added that the network got involved with a new condo development in the Eglinton Avenue West and Dufferin Street area after a resident asked the developers if they have a community benefit agreement in place.

"People are now more aware of this and are participating and leading," Powell said.

At the start, 13 labour coalition groups were part of the network and today there are 120.

Colette Murphy, chief executive officer of the Atkinson Foundation, said the network "is an anchor in the movement for decent work and a fair economy."

"We are so proud to stand with them in the fight for an inclusive workforce and a just approach to building modern cities," Murphy said.

The Atkinson Good Fight Prize is given out every five years. It was first awarded in 2017 to the Fight for \$15 and Fairness campaign, which advocated for better wages for workers.

The Atkinson Foundation was founded by former Toronto Star publisher Joseph E. Atkinson in 1942.

Author: Karon Liu, The Star reporter.

Originally Published on Dec 19, 2022 on The Star.

Events Calendar

- FEBRUARY **24** CHINESE WORKERS' NETWORK
(CWN) LUNAR NEW YEAR BANQUET
- FEBRUARY **28** GENDER EQUITY & LEADERSHIP
ROUNDTABLE
- MARCH **4** INTERNATIONAL WOMENS' DAY
RALLY AND MARCH
- MARCH **10** ENOUGH IS ENOUGH CAMPAIGN
KICKOFF IN TORONTO AND YORK
REGION
- MARCH **21** INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE
ELIMINATION OF RACIAL
DISCRIMINATION
- APRIL **28** HEALTH & SAFETY
ACTIVIST AWARDS DINNER
- APRIL **28** DAY OF MOURNING 2023
- JUNE **14** BROMLEY ARMSTRONG HUMAN
RIGHTS AWARDS
- JUNE **26** TORONTO MAYORAL BY-ELECTION



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