



Manitoba's Labour Movement marches for Labour Day in Winnipeg.

In face of attacks, we continue to stand up and fight back

This July, the Partnership to Defend Public Services, the coalition of public sector unions challenging the constitutional validity of the Pallister government's wage freeze legislation, learned that we were unsuccessful in our bid to secure an injunction against the so-called Public Services Sustainability Act (Bill 28). While winning an injunction would have meant an immediate victory for working families in our province, we knew all along that courts rarely grant injunctions in these types of cases.

Despite the injunction decision, our movement remains united and more committed than ever to standing up for our province's dedicated public sector workers. We will never back down when it comes to making sure the public services we all count on are protected, and the workers who deliver them are respected and treated fairly. We will continue to fight back against the Pallister government's cuts to services and attacks on Manitoba's 120,000 public sector workers.

Our main legal challenge will be heard by the Court of Queen's bench next year, starting on November 18, 2019. We remain confident in our case and look forward to making our arguments in court. All workers have the Charter-protected right to free and fair collective bargaining, and no government can take that away.

On behalf of the coalition, I want to thank our legal counsel, Garth Smorang, Shannon Carson and their whole team at Myers LLP for the incredible work they have done to date, and will continue to do to advance our legal challenge.

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KEVIN REBECK

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[1] Manitoba NDP Leader Wab Kinew, MFL Executive VP Marc Lafond, Manitoba Building Trades CEO Sudhir Sandhu, and President Rebeck at the Manitoba Building Trades AGM. **[2]** President Rebeck and MFL staff at tour of the Nelson Mandela exhibit at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. **[3]** President Rebeck and labour volunteers canvass with labour-endorsed Winnipeg School Division Trustee candidate Lisa Naylor **[4]** President Rebeck takes part in the Labour Day March in Winnipeg. **[5]** President Rebeck (in Spider Man costume) joins labour sisters Serina Lynne, Shannon Reynolds, and Melissa Dvorak prior to their participation in the Easter Seals Drop Zone in support of children, youth, and adults with disabilities.

Fight back, cont'd

legal challenge. And we will continue to keep you posted on developments in the case as we go forward.

This fall will be a busy one for the labour movement, as municipalities and school boards across the province will be holding their elections. Labour will be hard at work volunteering to help elect progressive candidates who will stand up for working families. I encourage you all to get out and help with a local campaign this fall.

The Manitoba Legislature will also resume sitting this October, and we will be taking the fight to the Pallister government over their misguided legislation that bans Project Labour Agreements. PLAs have served Manitobans well for decades through all different governments by ensuring that major infrastructure projects are built by well-trained, highly skilled workers. PLAs have been used to build virtually every major infrastructure project over the past 50 years, including Manitoba Hydro dams and the Floodway. These agreements deliver high value for money, with the recent Floodway expansion coming in nearly \$40 million under budget.

It is purely the result of their right wing ideology that the Pallister government has introduced a ban on PLAs. But your Manitoba Labour Movement, with strong leadership from the Manitoba Building Trades, will be there to stand-up for working families. Stay tuned for a campaign in support of PLAs starting soon.

Finally, I want to say a huge thank you to all of the unions that are supporting the planned celebrations for the 100th Anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike next year. The celebrations are sure to be exciting for all ages, and will serve to deepen our understanding of the importance of the Winnipeg General Strike to the history of the city, our province, and our country.

In solidarity,

Kevin Rebeck

President, Manitoba Federation of Labour

Pallister Government Reducing 'Access to Justice' for the Most Vulnerable

Access to justice is a fundamental principle for a free, fair and democratic society, and one that unions have always fought for.

Unfortunately, the Pallister government is taking us in the opposite direction with Bill 24: The Social Services Appeal Board Amendment Act. This incredibly short bill (one-and-a-half pages in total) has only one purpose: to reduce access to justice for many of Manitoba's most vulnerable citizens, including the unemployed, working poor and workers/persons with disabilities.

Under current law, when Manitobans who depend on social services to make ends meet (like EIA, Rent Assist, Community Living disABILITY Services or child care subsidies) have been denied a service or benefit unjustly, they can appeal government's decision to the Social Services Appeal Board (SSAB).

In making appeals to the SSAB (and other administrative tribunals), appellants are currently permitted to make arguments related to their Charter Rights being violated.

But no longer.

Bill 24 would change the mandate of the SSAB to prevent the tribunal from considering Charter Rights in its review of social service appeals.

This means that people, who are already struggling financially, and who believe their Charter Rights have been violated will have no other recourse than to launch a challenge through the court system, an incredibly expensive and often exhausting process. More likely,

they will simply go without the services and supports the need.

Government should be focused on making it easier for all people to exercise their Charter Rights, not more difficult.

Our Manitoba NDP Official Opposition was able to stop the government from ramming through Bill 24 in the spring, but because of the current PC majority in the legislature, public hearings and a vote on the Bill are expected this fall.

NDP critic Bernadette Smith is continuing to put the government on the hot seat, demanding that they respect the rights of vulnerable Manitobans.

The Manitoba Federation of Labour is participating in an informal coalition, "Charter Rights for All", and will be speaking out against Bill 24 and the disempowerment of vulnerable workers/citizens.



Manitoba's unions spread the word about domestic violence leave

The numbers are staggering – according to research by the CLC and Western University, one third of working Canadians have experienced domestic violence.

For far too long, domestic violence was thought of as a problem affecting home-life, not work-life. But the truth is, domestic violence doesn't stop when a woman leaves for work – it can also have a profound impact on what happens at work in terms of productivity, absenteeism, turnover and workplace health & safety.

The labour movement has worked hard to pressure governments to pass workplace violence legislation that offers some protection for workers experiencing violence at home. In Manitoba, the MFL Women's Committee worked closely with former NDP Labour Ministers Jennifer Howard and Erna Braun to pass the first-in-Canada provisions for paid domestic violence leave. Since then, several other provinces and the federal government have followed suit.

But a lot more needs to be done to raise awareness about this important new workplace right: any Manitoba worker who's experiencing domestic violence has the right to take leave from work to get help, with pay, and without fear of losing their job.

With generous donations from affiliates, the MFL Women's Committee is helping to spread the word with campaign bus benches, with information on the new law and how to access leave. A number of bus benches are being rotated throughout the City of Winnipeg, and we'll be installing out first bench in Brandon this September.

If you or any of your members are experiencing domestic violence, you can get more information about paid domestic violence leave at www.MFL.ca/leave



From left to right: MFL Executive Director Anna Rothney, President Rebeck, and MFL Women's Committee Chair Deb Jones at a new bus bench location on Nairn Avenue in Winnipeg.

MFL Occupational Health Centre helping newcomer families know their rights

For almost two decades, the MFL Occupational Health Centre (OHC) has been working with newcomer communities to build their capacity to identify and address health and safety issues with workers in their communities. Overtime, OHC has engaged with 18 different newcomer communities across Manitoba.

Newcomers to Canada, particularly those from racialized groups and recent immigrants, are more likely than Canadian-born workers to work in precarious, low-wage jobs. This includes jobs in factories, restaurants, hotels and retail stores. Because of the difficulty involved with finding a new job, and the demands associated with supporting dependents or sponsoring family members to Canada, new immigrants experience heavy pressure to keep jobs even if they face poor working conditions or injury. New immigrants may not know their workplace rights or be aware of existing community resources to assist them, such as Workers Compensation. They often experience great difficulty accessing existing resources due to language and cultural barriers.

The cornerstone of OHC's work with newcomers is a 'Train the Trainer' Program, a 10 week training program, one evening per week for selected trainees from a variety of newcomer communities. The Train the Trainer Program provides a solid foundation in worker health and safety. The program draws on the expertise of OHC staff as well as representatives from various other bodies, such as the Worker Advisor Office, Workplace Safety & Health Branch, and the Manitoba Human Rights Commission. This past year OHC trained 12 Community Trainers from the Somali, Syrian and East Indian communities.

Following the Train the Trainer Program, Community Trainers deliver workshops on worker health and safety in their own language to members of their own communities, in settings such as community centres, settlement agencies and churches. Workshops outside of the workplace with trusted community leaders in their own language allow newcomers to more freely discuss their concerns related to health and safety at work, and builds community connections and support. Every year, OHC Community Trainers deliver between 28-30 workshops in multiple languages. Last year OHC reached approximately 350 members of newcomer communities in this way.

OHC's valued and long-standing Cross Cultural Community Advisory Committee has helped design and oversee this work. Made up of both formal and informal leaders and helpers from newcomer communities, the Cross Cultural Community Advisory Committee ensures that OHC's work with newcomers is culturally competent, relevant, and accountable to the communities it serves through this program.

OHC's work with newcomer communities is widely recognized and respected by newcomer communities themselves, settlement organizations, funders, and government. In an era when we are threatened by division and fear, OHC provides an important example of how to engage in a way that strengthens communities that are too often on the margins of our society, and also strengthens and expands the work of the organization itself. As one of the leaders from a newcomer community said, "OHC understands that communities are partners."



Municipal and school board election season in full swing

It's municipal election season across Manitoba, and labour is out helping to get progressive candidates elected to municipal councils and school boards. It is important to get progressive voices around municipal council and school board tables. Municipalities and schools have major impacts on the daily lives of working families and employ tens of thousands of people across the province. The labour movement will be working hard this fall to make sure that labour-endorsed candidates win these vital elections.

It is important to have as many volunteers as possible from the labour movement to help knock on doors, fundraise, deliver signs, and get out the vote on election day.

For a complete list of municipal and school trustee candidates endorsed by the Winnipeg Labour Council, visit facebook.com/WinnipegLabourCouncil/



President Rebeck canvasses with Winnipeg Labour Council endorsed candidates for Fort Rouge-East Fory Garry Sherri Rollins (left) and Seven Oaks School Division Ward 2 Greg McFarlane (right)



Manitoba Federation of Labour Women's Committee

MEMORIAL LUNCH

HOLD THE DATE

THURSDAY DECEMBER 6 | 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Guest Speaker: Dr. Corinne L. Mason, Associate Professor, Gender and Women's Studies & Sociology, Brandon University

Tickets available starting in November



2018 Al Cerilli Scholarship winner

The MFL's Young Member Committee was proud to award this year's Al Cerilli Scholarship to Sheena Sanders. Sheena is an active member of PSAC Local 55600, and currently serves as the Vice President of Academics for the Direct Chartered Local at the University of Winnipeg. She was also elected to be part of the local's bargaining committee.

Sheena works as a marker at the University of Winnipeg and is completing a BA in Accounting, minoring in Human Resources. Her goal is to find employment in a union environment in the field of Finance.

The scholarship is presented annually to a member of an MFL affiliated union enrolled in a continuing education or post-secondary program.

The scholarship is named in honour of Al Cerilli, a long-time activist in the Manitoba labour movement.

The MFL wishes Sheena all the best in her studies.



President Rebeck awards Sheena the 2018 Al Cerilli Scholarship.



Sticking up for Churchill families

Working families in Churchill have finally received some welcome and long overdue good news: repairs on the rail line are finally set to begin.

This summer, the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA) ruled that OmniTRAX, the outgoing owner of the rail line to Churchill, is responsible for repairs to the tracks and ordered the company to start repairs.

Despite the fact that the Pallister government could have brought this urgent issue forward to the CTA, it was the Manitoba NDP, not the government, who stood up for the people of Churchill and made the case before the federal regulator.

Due to the CTA's legally binding order, a request for proposals was issued to fix the rail line, allowing the necessary repair work to move ahead this fall.

While the Manitoba NDP was working hard for the people of Churchill and northern Manitoba, the Pallister government sat on its hands and ignored them. That speaks volumes about how the Pallister government views working families in northern Manitoba.

Manitoba's labour movement, including PSAC-UCTE and UNIFOR, kept up the pressure at the provincial and federal level to ensure a fair deal was reached for Churchill. Thankfully, relief is now in sight for the working families of Churchill.



HEALTH & SAFETY CONFERENCE

Early bird registration



Deadline: Friday September 28, 2018
Fee: Winnipeg and Southern region – \$225
North of 53° – \$150

Regular registration

Deadline: Friday October 26 2018 (No exceptions)
Fee: Winnipeg and Southern region – \$275
North of 53° – \$175

NOVEMBER 13-14, 2018
CanadInns Polo Park, Winnipeg

Manitoba 
Federation
of Labour