



PRESIDENT REBECK JOINS WITH OTHER FEDERATION OF LABOUR PRESIDENTS TO CALL FOR PAID SICK DAYS FOR ALL WORKERS IN CANADA. (VIA ZOOM).

Sisters, Brothers and Friends,  
Sexual harassment and violence remain serious, pervasive problems in our society, and major barriers to women's equality, especially in the workplace. Sexual harassment and violence can have serious consequences on women's physical, emotional and mental health, and on their work performance and income security. It can compromise their ability to advance in the workplace and even lead to job loss.

Unions have played an important role in making workplaces safer for women, but there is much, much more work to be done to keep all workplaces, including our own union offices, free from sexual harassment and violence.

That is why we are urging all unions to take an important step in our collective fight to end

sexual harassment and violence by signing-up and participating in a new course called 'Creating a Culture of Consent in the Workplace'.

This course has been specially developed by the Manitoba Federation of Labour – Occupational Health Centre, in partnership with Klinik Community Health and SERC (Sexuality Education Resource Centre, MB) to give workplaces the kinds of tools to put an end to sexual harassment and violence. I encourage unions to promote this course to your organized workplaces so that more workers will benefit from it. You can learn more about how to register for this important resource on the back page of this President's Report.

With leadership, education and action we can end sexual harassment and violence.

We can make workplaces safe for women, and we can make sure that survivors are believed and that perpetrators are held accountable.

## MFL WELCOMES SEVERAL NEW AFFILIATES

Our MFL continues to grow, with the following unions recently voting to affiliate:

- CUPE 110;
- The Winnipeg Association of Public Service Officers Local 162; and
- Labourers' International Union of North America (LiUNA) Local 1258.

During this time of Brian Pallister's cuts, austerity and attacks on workers, it is more important than ever to have a strong, united movement

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to fight back and protect the the jobs and services that working families rely on.

## VIRTUAL INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CAMPAIGN

While we were unable to host our usual breakfast to celebrate International Women's Day, this year the Winnipeg and Brandon Labour Councils and the Canadian Labour Congress teamed up with the MFL to support an online IWD campaign.

The goal was for activists to celebrate women that have had an impact on their lives, and many people joined in to mark this important day.

The Nellie McClung Foundation has announced its 150 Manitoba Women Trailblazers, and I am excited to announce that former MFL President Sister Susan Hart-Kulbaba has been named to the list, along with Winnipeg General Strike leaders Helen Armstrong and Edith Hancox.

## NEW COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

After years of the Pallister government interfering in provincial collective bargaining, Partnership to Defend Public Services unions received some good news recently.

The Beautiful Plains Teachers' Association freely negotiated a new collective



agreement, including wage increases in the first two years, with their employer - the first such agreement in the education system in recent years. This fair bargaining process followed two successful arbitration awards won by the Louis Riel and Pembina Trails Teachers' Associations.

UFCW 832 bus drivers at the Winnipeg School Division (WSD) have also won a fair wage package from an arbitrator following their strike in the fall.

## MINING WORKERS IN FLIN FLON ARE BEING LEFT OUT IN THE COLD BY HUSBAY

Hudbay Minerals has shamefully decided to renege on an agreement it reached with United Steelworkers Local 7106 to

help transition mining workers to Snow Lake once the operations at the 777 mine in Flin Flon close down. Hudbay recently announced that it will lay off members outside of seniority, in contravention of the agreement it had reached this past summer.

At this time of economic uncertainty, the last thing that working families need is a company going back on its word. A deal is a deal, and Hudbay should live up to its word.

In Solidarity,

Kevin Rebeck  
PRESIDENT OF THE MANITOBA FEDERATION OF LABOUR

# Pallister lets employers off the hook for defined benefit pension obligations

This past December, out of the blue and without consulting unions, the Pallister government announced a moratorium on unfunded liability and solvency deficiency payments that employers are normally required to make for defined benefit pension plans that cover thousands of Manitoba workers. The moratorium will last for all of 2021.

Pensions are deferred wages, owed to workers when they retire. Essentially, the Pallister government has unilaterally decided that workers should loan these deferred wages to employers without ever

asking workers about it first.

While we certainly recognize the way that COVID-19 has been difficult on many employers, there is nothing in this government's plan that requires employers to put this money towards keeping people working.

We have seen how many businesses took the federal wage subsidy program, aid meant to maintain paycheques, and instead spent it on giving a windfall to their big shareholders through dividend payouts.

# New human rights calendar launched

The MFL's Human Rights and Equality Committee, in partnership with the Winnipeg Labour Council and the United Way have developed a Human Rights Days of Action Calendar for 2021 to help engage members on human rights issues globally and close to home.

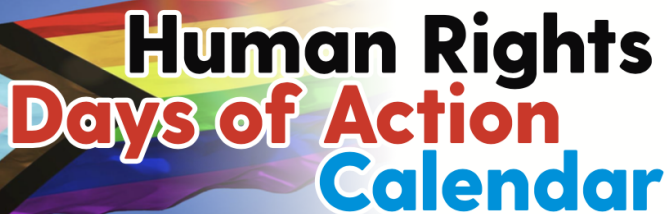
The calendar helps to recognize and raise awareness about specific days of the year that mark human rights struggles and achievements.

The calendar includes days and months that are recognized by the United Nations as well those that are significant to the labour movement and local human rights efforts.

You can download the calendar and sync it to your Outlook, Gmail or iCal accounts by visiting [mfl.ca](http://mfl.ca) and clicking one of the action buttons on the right hand side under the heading 'Human Rights Days of Action Calendar'.

Our office also has physical copies of the calendar, and you can get in touch at 204-947-1400 to receive yours.

As labour activists, we understand that labour rights and human rights are inextricably linked, and that human rights work is integral to the work we do. Thank you to the MFL Human Rights and Equality Committee for creating this calendar.



## Human Rights Days of Action Calendar

A JOINT PROJECT OF



Manitoba  
Federation  
of Labour  
Fairness For Everyone  
HUMAN RIGHTS and  
EQUALITY COMMITTEE



# Canada's federations of labour call for employer-paid sick days for all workers

Provincial and territorial federations of labour are united in demanding that provincial and territorial governments guarantee seamless access to universal, permanent and adequate employer-paid sick days for all workers.

More than half of all Canadian workers have no access to paid sick days. When they're sick, they face an impossible choice between making ends meet and staying home to protect public health and get better. It's a decision nobody should have to make.

Workplace outbreaks and transmissions during the COVID-19 pandemic have made it clear that paid sick leave is critical to protecting public health. Yet the gaps in coverage are huge, especially among low-wage workers. There's an urgent need for immediate government action — especially with new, highly-contagious variants now spreading through our population.

It's a public health imperative that sick workers stay home from work, and not just during the pandemic. Illnesses like influenza cause thousands of hospitalizations and deaths in Canada every

year. By curbing the spread of infectious diseases, employer-paid sick days would protect public health while increasing workplace productivity, offering more stable income for workers and reducing health costs for governments.

The Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit is a small step forward, but it falls far short of what is needed. It's temporary by design and restricted to COVID-related illness. It interrupts workers' income, making them apply and then wait for the benefit to arrive. And the benefit itself only replaces a fraction of lost pay for many workers. While this new benefit helps, it isn't universal and permanent paid sick leave.

We must ensure that every worker knows that when they are sick, they will not pay a financial penalty for doing the right thing and staying home to protect public health.

Public support for employer-paid sick days is strong throughout Canada. The need has never been more apparent or more urgent.

# New activist guide will help you fight back against Pallister's plans to wreck labour laws

The MFL continues to pressure the Pallister Conservatives to stop their plans to tip the scales against workers by re-writing Manitoba's labour laws.

In the winter issue of the President's Report, we told you about Bill 16, The Labour Relations Amendment Act. If passed, the bill will significantly alter collective bargaining in Manitoba and lead to less fairness and more conflict in the workplace.

Since then, the MFL has been leading a fight back campaign to raise awareness of this legislation within the labour movement and in the broader public.

At the end of January, we released a short video that explains the threats that this bill poses to workers and unions. You can watch the video at [mfl.ca/StopBill16](http://mfl.ca/StopBill16) or on the MFL YouTube page. Please share it with your networks to help spread the word about how the Pallister Conservatives want to re-write our labour laws to tip the scales against working people.

We will be running a public awareness campaign throughout the province this spring to make sure Manitobans know about Pallister's plans to wreck our labour laws. Stay tuned for more about this campaign, which will launch in early April.

To help inform and engage union members about this bill, the MFL has also included an Activist Guide to Bill 16: The Labour Relations Amendment Act. Whether you just want to know the basics about what this bill will mean for you and your union, or whether you are seeking a more technical analysis of the bill, this new activist guide is full of information that will help you understand and talk about it.

The MFL has sent out copies to unions, and you can also download the activist guide from our website at [mfl.ca/StopBill16](http://mfl.ca/StopBill16). Once you have learned more about what this bill means for unions, the next step is to get involved in fighting back to stop it.

And there are several ways that you can help.

## TAKE ACTION!



We need your help to stop Bill 16! There are several ways that union activists can get involved in our campaign.

## Educating members

Member to member conversations are some of the most powerful ways to engage and educate union members about the threats that this bill poses to unions and workers.

We encourage you to use the resources in this Activist Guide to help inform activists and union members about what is at stake with this bill, and how we can fight back against it.

If we are going to stop this bill from passing, we all need to fight it together.

## Schedule the MFL to present to your Local/Executive about Bill 16

President Rebeck is always happy to speak to your Local and/or Executive about this bill and how unions are fighting back. If you would like to arrange for President Rebeck to present to a meeting of your Local and/or Executive, please contact the MFL by emailing [admin@mfl.mb.ca](mailto:admin@mfl.mb.ca) or calling 204-947-1400.



# ACTIVIST GUIDE TO BILL 16

## THE LABOUR RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT



## Sign our petition and support our public awareness campaign

The MFL will be running a campaign throughout 2021 to raise public awareness about the harmful impacts this bill will have on unions and working people. It will feature digital ads and social media content, as well as billboards.

Please share our social media content with your networks, and sign and share our petition at [mfl.ca/StopBill16](https://mfl.ca/StopBill16).

By signing, you will send an email directly to Premier Pallister and Finance Minister Scott Fielding. Please share the petition on social media.

## Talking directly to politicians

We need to make sure that provincial politicians know we do not like this bill and what it will do to unions and working people.

You can send a message directly to Brian Pallister and the minister in charge of this legislation, Scott Fielding. Brian Pallister's email is [Premier@leg.gov.mb.ca](mailto:Premier@leg.gov.mb.ca) and his Twitter handle is @BrianPallister. You can also call Pallister's constituency office at 204-489-0828.

To get in touch with Scott Fielding, email him at [minfin@leg.gov.mb.ca](mailto:minfin@leg.gov.mb.ca) or call his constituency office at 204-889-0540. His Twitter handle is @MinFielding.

You can also get in touch with your local MLA about this bill and why you oppose it. You can request a meeting or send an email, but the more pressure we put on provincial politicians, the better. Once you have met with them or sent your message, let your social media networks know about it and how it went.

This helps to build momentum and inform people outside of union activist circles.

## Sign up to speak about Bill 16 at legislative committee

We need as many union activists as possible to join with us and make their voices heard by signing up to speak against Bill 16 at legislative committee meetings. While unions can determine an official spokesperson to speak to the bill, you can also sign up as a private citizen and make sure your voice is heard.

As Manitobans, we all have the right to speak at legislative committees and tell Premier Pallister exactly what we think of Bill 16. Let's show our strong opposition with a strong turnout – there's strength in numbers!

You can sign up today by calling 204-945-3636 and telling the Legislative Clerk's office you want to be added to the list of people who want to speak about Bill 16 (they'll let you know the time/date/location once the legislative committee meetings are scheduled). They will likely be scheduled later this year.

The MFL will be more than happy to provide you with resources to help prepare your presentation. Anyone who cannot attend the legislative committee meeting dates when they are set can send in a written submission instead.



A STILL OF PRESIDENT REBECK FROM THE MFL'S SHORT VIDEO ABOUT THE RISKS OF BILL 16.

# Al and Alma Cerilli

## MFL Scholarship

**YOUNG MEMBERS, APPLY NOW**

**Deadline for applications is May 28, 2021**

**Visit [mfl.ca](https://mfl.ca) for details**

# Pallister Conservatives set their sites on construction workers and the trades

Right around the holiday season, the Pallister government decided to go after workers in the construction industry and trade sectors, by proposing a rollback of construction workers' wages and deciding to weaken rules that keep apprentices safe and well-trained on the job.

In late December, Pallister's Finance Minister Scott Fielding sent a letter to construction industry stakeholders stating that his government was intent on repealing The Construction Industry Wages Act. This law sets out the minimum wage standards for workers in the construction industry.

The letter caused uproar among unions, workers, and employers, so much so that the Pallister government quickly backed down from its proposal to repeal the legislation.

Fielding has since committed to working on raising the minimum wages for construction workers in the Act. While we will need to see the proof before celebrating, I do want to thank the Manitoba Building Trades and its affiliate unions, as well as construction workers, for their advocacy on behalf of good paying jobs in the construction industry.

Unfortunately, the Pallister government did proceed to weaken apprenticeship ratios in December, moving from a 1:1 ratio to a 2:1 ratio.

This change could lead to more injuries and accidents at workplaces throughout our province. It also means the quality of the training will be weakened.

Manitobans that work in the trades are essential to our economy, and they often work with potentially dangerous equipment and in situations where risks are heightened.

The longstanding 1:1 ratio meant safer workplaces for Manitobans as they learned their trade from those with experience. This watering down of workplace safety rules moves our province in the wrong direction.

Now is the time to invest in the skilled trades, and ensure that well-trained workers are able to work safely here at home for years to come. Sadly, the Pallister government continues to make decisions that will put workers at risk on the job.

SAVE THE DATE

GROWING OUR  
MOVEMENT

Manitoba  
Federation  
of Labour

2022 MFL CONVENTION  
MAY 5-7 BRANDON

# MFL panel discussion highlights the history of Canada's first Black railway workers union

As part of Black History Month, the MFL hosted a panel discussion about the new CBC and BET+ original series called *The Porter*, an upcoming television series set in the 1920s. Inspired by real events, *The Porter* follows four main characters against the backdrop of a time when railway workers from Canada and the United States joined together to give birth to the world's first Black union.

The series is produced by Winnipeg-based Inferno Pictures Inc. and Sphere Media's Sienna Films, and was originated and created by Arnold Pinnock and Bruce Ramsay, with Annmarie Morais, Marsha Greene and Aubrey Nealon.

The panel discussion, hosted by the MFL, featured Pinnock, Greene as well as Ian Dimmerman, president of Inferno Pictures, and Dr. Saje Mathieu, associate professor of history at the University of Minnesota and author of *North of the Color Line: Migration and Black Resistance in Canada, 1870-1955*.

*The Porter* is set to begin filming in Winnipeg this spring, and the location choice was no accident. Winnipeg was the first Canadian city to have a Black railway workers' union in 1917 - the Order of Sleeping Car Porters (OSCP). The Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees excluded black workers and pushed for separate negotiating schedules and wages for Black and white workers. And so, Black railway porters formed their own union. These workers often faced racism and condescension from the wealthy passengers whose needs they tended to, but also from their employers and white workers and unions.

But, as Dr. Mathieu made clear in the panel discussion, the members of the OSCP never

lost their belief in the power of collective action and their union.

Despite being marginalized and racialized within their workplace, in 1919 the Order of Sleeping Car Porters joined with 30,000 other workers in the Winnipeg General Strike. Later the OSCP merged with the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

It was a moving discussion. The show is set in Post World War One Montreal, and the dramatization it is set against the real-world rise of the Brotherhood of Black Sleeping Car Porters, a union that would go on to help drive the Civil Rights Movement in North America. The panel focused on the intersection of Black workers contribution to Canada's cultural and labour history, Canada's own systematic racism and how the skills and passion of activists, artists and storytellers can help us learn more

about where our society has been, and where it needs to go.

We need to continue to learn from our past, as a movement and as a country. The Porter panel discussion helped us to do that.

As panelist Marsha Greene said best, this show is about Black ambition. I encourage all union members and allies to watch *The Porter* when it airs later this year.

We all need to learn more about the important history of Black railway porters, and about the history of Black workers in general, and the impact that they had on our movement.

By investigating histories that have been out of view for too many of us for far too long, we can learn more about our movement, about our country and about ourselves. I want to thank everyone who took part in our Black History Month panel discussion.



**BLACK  
HISTORY  
MONTH**

# CREATING A CULTURE OF CONSENT IN THE WORKPLACE

FREE WORKSHOP

**Workplace sexual harassment is a harmful pattern of behaviour that negatively impacts individual staff as well as larger workplace units and teams.**

This workshop will focus on such topics as:

- Identifying and discussing the underlying issues that may lead to sexual harassment
- Increasing supportive approaches toward staff who have disclosed their experiences of sexual harassment in the workplace
- Developing a language of consent that encourages respect and understanding in the workplace
- Highlighting effective by-stander skills for intervention

*Due to the limitations around Covid-19 and distancing safety protocols, this 6 hour in-person workshop is currently on hold and a shorter online version will be available of the main themes of the original workshop to aid in preparing the workplace to begin these conversations.*



To book this workshop, fill out this form: [bit.ly/consentABC](https://bit.ly/consentABC)

To ask questions, call or email:

**Lauren Babara Checkley: (204) 982-7804 • [laurenc@serc.mb.ca](mailto:laurenc@serc.mb.ca)**

**Richard McCrae: (204) 926-7907 • [rmccrae@mflohc.mb.ca](mailto:rmccrae@mflohc.mb.ca)**

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