

---

---

# THE CUPE CONNECTION

Official Publication of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 38  
1439—9th Av. SE, Calgary, T2G 0T4, Phone (403)233-2700 Fax (403)290-1757  
Email—office@cupe38.org Website-www.cupe38.org

---

VOLUME 23 ISSUE 7



September 2015

---

## EXPAND THE PLAN!

*Statement by Paul Moist, CUPE National President, in response to the Fraser Institutes' recent report on the expansion of the Canada Pension Plan*

Encouraging Canadians to rely heavily on voluntary savings schemes for their retirement incomes is a fools' errand that will only deepen this country's pension crisis. Yet the Conservatives, banks and other financial institutions, and right-wing think tanks keep promoting RRSPs and other individual savings vehicles over the far more effective, efficient and affordable way of helping the over 11 million Canadians without a work place pension – expanding the Canada Pension Plan.

The latest CPP roadblock comes from the Fraser Institute. The right-wing think tank claims expanding the CPP would lead to Canadians contributing less to RRSPs. The simple response to their less than vigorous analysis is – so what? While individual savings are an integral part of Canada's pension system, relying heavily on RRSPs for retirement income is a risky strategy.

RRSPs are insecure, subject to high management fees, and are often funded without any contributions from employers. These factors leave retirement savings at risk of being wiped out by financial market instability, and pose the very real threat of people out living their savings.

*Continued on Page 3*

## Unions and Anti-Poverty Work

*The following is a member submission to the newsletter.*

Historically unions, and our allies in progressive social and political movements, have been at the forefront in the struggle against poverty in Canada. Not only has the labour movement helped organized workers in terms of better wages, job security and safe working conditions, they have also supported the expansion of the rights of non-organized workers in areas such as pensions, occupational health and safety, health care and a shortened work week. This has been particularly important for women in the labour force.

However, many of these important gains are under attack from the anti-worker Liberal-Conservative social, economic and political agenda. This agenda has significant and long-term implications. For example, we are seeing the stubborn persistence of poverty amongst certain social groups, and a growing inequality gap in terms of both income and wealth. This is unnecessary and unjust. It is also unhealthy, not only for individuals and families living in poverty, but for society as a whole. Therefore, it is essential that unions re-engage in this much needed anti-poverty work.

There are a number of ways to fight poverty. Some of these include:

- ◆ Implementation of a system of progressive taxation and introduction of royalty protocols that respect the collective nature of our natural resources
- ◆ Provision of a system of Quality, Universal, Affordable and Developmentally appropriate childcare (this is a particularly effective anti-poverty measure for women and their families)
- ◆ Support for the payment of "living wages" and a higher minimum wage
- ◆ Extension of basic supports to agricultural workers
- ◆ Recognition of the credentials of foreign trained workers

*Continued on Page 2*

## Voting Matters!

In 2011, Stephen Harper and the Conservatives won the 14 seats they needed for a majority government by only 6,201 votes. If some of the 9.4 million voters who stayed home had voted, we may have been able to stop devastating Conservative cuts to health care, women’s groups, Employment Insurance, Old Age Security and environmental protections.

- ◆ Make sure you’re registered at [elections.ca](http://elections.ca)
- ◆ Watch for your voter information card in the mail
- ◆ Make sure you have the right ID
- ◆ Find out about candidates in your riding
- ◆ Make a plan to go vote!

For more information: [elections.ca](http://elections.ca)  
1-800-463-6868

	NDP	Conservatives	Liberals
<b>Retirement security</b> Protect our pensions and expand CPP	✓	X	✓
<b>Child care</b> \$15 a day national child care program	✓	X	X
<b>Health care</b> Reversing \$36 billion in Conservative cuts	✓	X	X
<b>Good jobs and the economy</b> Create good paying jobs by supporting public services and fighting privatization	✓	X	?
<b>Post-secondary education</b> Stable and predictable long term funding	✓	X	✓
<b>Airline safety</b> Work to restore health and safety regulations like the ratio of one flight attendant per 40 passengers	✓	X	X
<b>Civil liberties and human rights</b> Repeal C-51, respect aboriginal sovereignty and restore funding to women’s and other development organizations	✓	X	X
<b>Workers’ rights</b> Support free collective bargaining and repeal C-377 and C-525	✓	X	?
<b>Climate change</b> Federal leadership and action	✓	X	✓

## Unions and Anti-Poverty Work...Continued from Page 1

- ◆ Expansion of the public pension system to provide adequate income replacement programs for older workers
- ◆ Organization of workers in the private sector, and
- ◆ Adequate financial and programming support for people with disabilities

*The labour movement can be at the forefront of anti-poverty work in Calgary, Alberta and Canada. It was necessary in the past, and is much needed now. We can fight poverty. There are many ways to do this, and the labour movement can take the lead. We also have a great opportunity with the NDP’s historic victory. Let’s act in solidarity, because when we do we all win.*

## Stress and the Economy

Falling oil prices, and their subsequent impact on the Alberta economy, has spurred a series of phone calls to the Local over this summer. It is very apparent that most households have been impacted in one way or another by the downturn in the economy. Some members’ spouses lost their jobs, while for others their spouses jobs are in jeopardy. As well, some members have children returning home. All of this has put stress on the members and have them looking for more overtime, promotions or re-assurance that their positions are safe.

In conversation with City Officials, we are being told that the City believes it can handle the current downturn by managing the vacancies that arise. There are no plans for large scale layoffs. The reality is that Calgary continues to attract people and, as such, continues to grow. This is resulting in a backlog of much needed services that are waiting for the funding to proceed.

Let’s hope that oil will regain some of the value it has lost over the last year, and all of Alberta can move forward in creating a great place to raise a family.

## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH



*Don't wait for the perfect moment, take the moment and make it perfect.*

*~ Zoey Sayward*

### And the Sunshine List Goes On...

In July, persons unknown filed a Freedom of Information request to obtain the "names, salary ranges, and classifications of all municipal employees with media relations, communications, or public information functions" and "the total pay and benefit costs for each of 2012, 2013, and 2014". It is our understanding that the City has subsequently released this information to persons unknown, and our members have been notified that their names could potentially be published in the media.



We cannot help but connect this request to City Council's earlier decision to publish a Sunshine List. There was a large cost to producing this list, and now the City has to dedicate yet more staff to compiling more information to meet these FOIP requests. What is ironic is that while City employees have their privacy stripped away, the persons unknown making the request have their privacy protected!

To date, Council has not been able to answer a basic question: given the cost of assembling this list, given the intrusion into the privacy of our members, what long term value does this list provide? In the short term, it allows Council to portray themselves as somehow transparent. It is disturbing that the City Counsellors wish to score short term political points at the expense of their employees.

Although many Calgarians will likely not remember this issue in four years' time at the next municipal election, it is likely to be remembered by those employees whose privacy has been exposed.

Come join your CUPE 38  
Social Committee for some great  
Fall Family Fun

On October 10, 2015 at 5pm

When the Calgary Stampeders take on the  
Edmonton Eskimos



VS.

Tickets are available for \$12.50 per person  
with a maximum of 4 tickets per member  
Tail Gate Party to start at 3pm  
Free hotdogs, chips and pop or water to  
our ticket holders

For Tail Gate Party and Ticket infor-  
mation, please visit

[www.cupe38.org](http://www.cupe38.org)

**\*\*CUPE 38 Office will NOT have tickets  
available,  
you must see one of the Stewards selling  
tickets – list on website\*\***

### Expand the Plan... Continued from Page 1

And the statistics clearly show Canadians aren't contributing to RRSPs. In 2013, only 23 per cent of people filing taxes reported any contributions. Canadians have almost \$900 billion dollars in unused room to contribute. After decades of stagnant wages, most Canadians are just trying to make ends meet.

So why should we prop up the obviously flawed RRSP by forsaking a much better and fairer solution? By expanding CPP benefits with modest, affordable phased-in increases to the contributions made by workers and employers, we can ensure millions of Canadians have a secure, reliable pension, indexed for inflation for their entire retirements.

# **REGULAR MEETING**



**Tuesday, September 22, 2015**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Union Office**

**1439—9th Avenue South East**

**BUSINESS: Regular**

**Elections:**

1. One (1) member to the Social Committee.