



CUPE Joint Bargaining News

LOCAL 79

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Don't drive a wedge between us and the people we serve

As in the early 1990s, one of the major pressures on the city budget will be the growing numbers of residents forced to turn to social assistance as jobs are lost. It is wrong for the city to suggest that savings from freezing non-union wages would go to cover social assistance costs, pitting one group of city employees against unemployed workers.

The real travesty is that so few people in Toronto are eligible for employment insurance benefits, even though they have been paying into the fund for years.

Plus, provincial and federal governments have refused to properly fund municipalities, forcing them to nickel-and-dime frontline workers.

Rather than trying to force public sector workers to pay for this and other recession-related problems, governments should be working to fix the employment insurance problem. They should also examine the causes of the economic downturn and focus on reforms designed to prevent international financial giants from causing another global crisis.

Wage freeze is wrong remedy for economic ills Best solution is a negotiated settlement

The City's proposal to freeze the wages of non-union employees is the wrong remedy for economic ills caused by the current recession.

Attacking the wages of City employees, union or non-union, is not the right way to help get us through and out of the recession. Public services have a critical role to play in recovery, but not through wage erosion.

Our work contributes to the economy by supporting those in need and building a stronger base of public and social infrastructure for everyone.

We also contribute to the community and the economy through spending – on housing, groceries, transportation, recreation, clothing – all the things that we need for daily living.

We know that most of you have just started to feel like you were finally catching up after the restraint imposed during the last recession

and annual inflation.

That's why we're committed to working hard at the bargaining table to reach a negotiated settlement and finding resolutions to the difficult issues that confront us and the City.

The City of Toronto Administrative, Professional and Supervisory Association has accused Mayor Miller of targeting non-union employees for a wage freeze while planning to hand us a "lavish" settlement. Nothing could be further from the truth.

City managers would be better off joining with Local 416 and Local 79 to

fight short-sighted policies like a wage freeze.

We are engaged in hard bargaining. And that's the difference between CUPE and COTAPSA. Because management is a non-union group, the City can dictate their wages and working conditions.

Fortunately we are in a position to negotiate the terms and conditions at the bargaining table – and that's what we're doing.

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