

NATIONAL CONTRACTING OUT AND PRIVATIZATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE

As Canada's largest union, fighting privatization has always been an integral part of CUPE's work, and is why the National Contracting Out and Privatization Coordinating Committee (NCPCC) is one of CUPE's oldest advisory committees. Privatization takes on various forms and our members are feeling its threats and effects from coast to coast. Our union's mandate in Strategic Directions was very clear: our work to defend public services and fight privatization in all its forms must continue. The committee developed a two-year workplan to support this mandate, as well as advance work on privatization-specific resolutions that were adopted at the 2015 National Convention.

Through our workplan, committee members have been able to bring the knowledge gathered at their meetings and beyond back to their respective regions and sectors. This information is key to supporting existing regional and sectoral anti-privatization work. By sharing information during meetings, NCPCC members can study and learn from different models and structures which exist outside their region or sector. These connections help committee members build capacity on the ground, encourage anti-privatization activism, and ensure local activists are connected to national resources which can be accessed to assist them in their fightbacks.

The work of the committee also allows for accurate and detailed mapping of privatization across the country and across sectors. This helps CUPE be better prepared to respond to threats, support campaigns on the ground, and tackle broader policy fights in all provinces and on the federal stage. This mapping work has proven useful for supporting local and regional campaigns as well as assisting regions in determining their fightback priorities through the National Anti-Privatization Fund.

Over the past two years, members of the NCPCC have worked to improve their lobbying skills to tackle other issues such as opposing trade agreements, which undermine public services, increase privatization and threaten democracy. Members have also supported the development of tools to educate our pension trustees on the dangers of pension fund investment in the development, building, ownership and operation of infrastructure.

Over the past two years, the members of the committee have contributed to developing and promoting CUPE's tools to assist with successful campaigns to contract work back in. These include CUPE's publication *Back In House*, and other presentations and toolkits developed by CUPE's

privatization researchers. These tools have proved useful in some of the fights the committee has seen taken on in the past two years.

Committee members celebrated and learned from successful campaigns, including the *Keep Cassellholme Public* Campaign which prevented the privatization of a municipally funded home for the aged in North Bay, Ontario; a campaign that saw 75 per cent of voters rejecting a P3 wastewater facility in Comox Valley, British Columbia; the long-anticipated decision to build a public wastewater treatment facility in the Capital Region District of Victoria, British Columbia; forcing Toronto's mayor to back down from plans to contract out more of the city's solid waste collection; challenging the use of private MRIs in Saskatchewan and strong challenges to for-profit plasma collection across the country. These are just some of the ways that CUPE members and leaders across the country have defended public services at the bargaining table and through campaigns.

Other battles are still ongoing such as the fight against the sale of Hydro One in Ontario; private clinic owner Brian Day's legal challenge of Medicare, underway in British Columbia; the development of a new Canada Infrastructure Bank; and the campaign against a P3 rapid transit project being built in Montreal with pension funds. Many of our contracting-in success stories have been shared on cupe.ca and featured in CUPE's publications. These victories are important and they fuel the work of this committee.

Through CUPE's member education programs, public education and policy push-back, the NCPCC hopes to multiply the number of success stories and continue to build member capacity to take on local, regional and national fights against privatization. As resources are updated and available, the committee strongly advocates for these to be widely shared, and developed into workshops that increase the activist base on these issues as much as possible.

The committee has also increased its own capacity by receiving training on lobbying for political action, learning how capital strategies can be helpful in influencing decision-makers, discussing the concrete steps needed to bring work back in-house, and examining how we can mobilize trustees to avoid investment of our pension funds in private infrastructure.

The committee has seen the power in taking on privatization through provincial coalition building and

direct member engagement and action. CUPE Saskatchewan rolled out the *Own it!* campaign which is even more relevant given the Saskatchewan government's 2017 austerity budget. Newfoundland and Labrador and Saskatchewan have faced direct attacks on the public library system which have resulted in brilliant and inspiring public campaigns to protect library services. With health care under attack in Quebec, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, direct action and political action will be important tools to resist and protect CUPE work and CUPE members. Committee members are well-equipped to support these efforts and access national resources required to fight back.

CUPE's power lies in our ability to connect with all of our members. As CUPE members, as workers, and as members of our communities, we continue to build closer connections with those we work with, make our union work relevant and accessible to all, work in coalition and solidarity with other unions, community groups, and members of the public. This will strengthen our movement and go a long way in protecting well-paying, secure public sector jobs and services for all.

Respectively submitted by,

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