

■ ■ The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour

# LABOUR REPORTER

THE VOICE OF SASKATCHEWAN'S WORKING FAMILIES SINCE 1956



WINTER  
2018

• EDUCATE • AGITATE • ORGANIZE •

## OWN IT! FORCES SASK PARTY TO AMEND BILL 40 BUT FULL REPEAL IS STILL REQUIRED

THE SASKATCHEWAN FEDERATION OF Labour is demanding the Sask. Party government to fully repeal its unpopular and unnecessary Bill 40, including provisions that let the provincial government wind up or dissolve any Crown corporation and liquidate its assets – all without asking Saskatchewan people.

“By the premier’s own admission, Bill 40 is grossly unpopular with Saskatchewan voters. Brad Wall promised he would repeal the unnecessary bill, but with the half-measure we saw introduced in late November, it appears as though he has broken yet another promise to

protect our Crown corporations,” said SFL president Larry Hubich.

“I am calling on the Sask. Party government to actually keep a promise made to Saskatchewan voters by fully repealing Bill 40,” he added.

Bill 40, introduced in late 2016, changed the definition of privatization to allow the Sask. Party government to sell off 49 percent of any Crown corporation without asking Saskatchewan voters through a referendum.

Bill 40 also allowed the Sask. Party government to privatize by ‘winding-up’ or dissolving a Crown, such as it did with STC.

Since then, the Own It! campaign – a coal-

ition of workers’ groups and community groups – held dozens of rallies, town halls, and others events across the province.

Own It! also fully supports a plebiscite petition effort on the matter being organized by a community group called Sask. Crowns.

These two initiatives led the charge against Bill 40, and forced the Sask. Party government to backtrack.

“We will never stop our efforts to protect Crown corporations from privatization,” said Hubich, “we will continue our education and outreach initiatives on Bill 40 until it’s completely repealed.”



Larry Hubich speaks at an Own It! rally about the need to fully repeal Bill 40. | PHOTO COURTESY OF EAGLE THOM, CUPE

### CONTENTS

**We’re not gonna take it** P.2

A partial repeal of Bill 40 won’t cut it

**Photo Essay** P.4-5

SFL 2017 convention highlights

**Survivors need paid leave** P.6

Provincial bill needs more work

**Petition still critical** P.7

Sask crowns are still vulnerable

**In Brief** P.8

IBEW rejects offer, thanks from SEIU-West

*The Labour Reporter* is published by the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour.  
Editor: Kent Peterson, k.peterson@sfl.sk.ca.  
Mailing address: 220-2445 13th Avenue, Regina, Sask. Phone: 306-525-0197 Fax: 306-525-8960  
Website: www.sfl.sk.ca Email: sfl@sfl.sk.ca  
This newsletter is written by members of CUPE 4828 and designed by Michelle Houlden, GSU Local 5.



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

# WE'RE NOT GONNA TAKE IT



ON OCTOBER 18, 500 rank-and-file workers hit the streets of Saskatoon and marched down to the Saskatchewan Government Cabinet Office to tell the Sask. Party government: we're not gonna take it!

We aren't going to take the privatization of our Crown corporations. On this issue, we're winning. The Sask. Party government got more than it bargained for with its Crown privatization law – Bill 40 – and now they know a partial repeal isn't good enough either. As SFL president Larry Hubich said the day of the march and rally: "We forced the Sask. Party to blink. Your job now is to not tap the break and see what happens, but rather double-down and hit the gas pedal and to promise that we will never stop, we will never slow down until Bill 40 is gone and every single one of our Crown corporations is

safe again!"

We also aren't going to take a 3.5% roll-back of workers' wages.

IBEW members were the first to say 'no way' formally, but it's pretty clear from other leaders in our movement that there is little interest in pickpocketing Saskatchewan workers.

"There is absolutely no interest in this ... total compensation decrease," said SEIU-West President Barbara Cape told the Leader-Post. SGEU's Bob Bymoan added, "there's a solid resolve across all of our bargaining units that they're not going to agree to it."



“ Our members did not make the mess the government finds itself in today and we will not be held responsible for its financial mismanagement.

**TOM GRAHAM**  
CUPE SASK. PRESIDENT



CUPE Saskatchewan recently called on the Sask. Party government to scrap the unworkable -3.5% mandate altogether. “Not one single CUPE local has agreed to accept a rollback in compensation since this regressive mandate was announced earlier this year. CUPE bargains forward, not backwards,” said CUPE Saskatchewan president Tom Graham, “our members did not make the mess the government finds itself in today and we will

not be held responsible for its financial mismanagement,” he added.

What workers, their unions, and the federation of labour are doing is working. We need to keep the pressure on, and commit to contacting our respective MLAs, attending rallies, planning days of action, and developing strategies in each of our workplaces to push-back against the Sask. Party government and their mismanagement, scandal, and waste.



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# What's happening to Sears pensioners and workers should be criminal

Since Sears Canada first filed for insolvency in June of this year, it has paid out \$6.5 million in bonuses to rich executives in its head office. This, while 16,000 Sears workers have recently lost or will soon lose their job — without receiving a nickel of severance.

That should be criminal.

Frontline retail workers did not cause the collapse of Sears – millionaire executives did. So why are those same fat cats receiving millions more in bonuses?

In addition to the current workers who have been left with nothing, according to CBC there are an additional 16,000 Sears pensioners who could lose their livelihoods.

In Canada, high-flying executives and corporations get to cut in line ahead of workers and pensioners when a company goes bankrupt – it's time to change that.

The SFL supports MP Marilène Gill and NDP MP Scott Duvall in their efforts to change the laws in Canada to make pensioners a “secured creditor” or “super priority” when a company goes under.

Workers and pensioners didn't cause this mess; they shouldn't be the ones paying for it. People who work hard for an employer and play by the rules should never have to suffer the consequences of poor decisions made by CEOs and millionaire executives.

The federal Liberal government has said they have no plans to change the current laws to protect workers and pensioners. Please email Minister Navdeep Bains to express your concern: [Navdeep.Bains@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Navdeep.Bains@parl.gc.ca).

**LARRY HUBICH** | SFL PRESIDENT

# SFL CONVENTION: EDUCATION

Saskatchewan's House of Labour came together Oct. 18-20 in Saskatoon to learn, take action, and conduct the business of the SFL at its annual convention.

HERE ARE just a few pictures from the convention, which included the following panels, guest speakers, and presentations

- Jingle dress dance with Randi Candline
- a panel on reconciliation and the role organized labour can play with Max Fineday and Darlene Okemaysim-Sicotte
- We're Not Gonna Take It march and rally
- a presentation from Moon Time Sisters with Nicole White
- a keynote address on Cannabis and the Workplace by Dr. Kathleen Thompson
- a panel on good union jobs in a green economy with David Thompson and Donald Lafleur
- a presentation on mental health and addiction with Ronni Nordal
- a tribute to Barb Byers featuring the Starry Night String Quartet
- a candle-lighting ceremony to recognize workers who were killed on the job
- presentation of the Bob Sass OH&S Award to Jesse Todd
- an address by CLC vice-president Donald Lafleur
- a presentation on Own It! by Kent Peterson
- a women's luncheon on domestic violence by Nicole Sarauer
- a presentation by Dr. Charles Smith on the Byers-Makahonuk Lecture Series
- a presentation by the United Way and STR8 UP's Shane Patridge
- a presentation by Tim Quigley and Barb Byers from Sask. Crowns
- a presentation on the SFL's Summer Camp
- a banquet and performance by Rosie and the Riveters
- an address by Leader of the Official Opposition Nicole Sarauer



Red dresses hung from the ceiling in a remarkable display at convention to honour missing and murdered Indigenous women.



# ATE, AGITATE, ORGANIZE



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Delegates vote on resolutions. • Larry Hubich delivers the President's Address at the start of convention. • Jingle dress dancer Randi Candline gave an inspiring performance. • Dr. Kathleen Thompson gave an address on cannabis in the workplace. • Lori Johb with this year's Bob Sass OH&S Award recipient, Jesse Todd. • Candle lighting ceremony to recognize workers killed on the job.

## LEGISLATION



# SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE NEED PAID LEAVE

THE SFL IS CALLING FOR the adoption of a private member's bill that would see necessary supports put into place for survivors of domestic violence, including paid leave.

"We know from national and provincial studies that domestic violence follows survivors to the workplace. One of the many ways domestic violence impacts work is survivors may delay or abandon plans to flee their abuser if it could result in losing their job," said Lori Johb, SFL Secretary-Treasurer and Chair of the SFL's Women's Committee.

"It breaks my heart that survivors in Saskatchewan must choose between protecting themselves and their children, and keeping their livelihood. We are calling for the adoption of Bill 605 so that survivors can have access to paid leave from work," she added.

Introduced by the Sask. NDP in early November, the bill will allow survivors of domestic violence to take paid and unpaid leaves from work. Such leave can be taken to seek medical attention for the victim or their child, to obtain services from a victim services organization, to obtain counselling, to relocate, and to seek legal or law enforcement assistance. The bill also requires accommodation by employers to protect workers if an employer becomes aware, or ought reasonably to be aware, that domestic violence that would likely expose a worker to physical injury may occur in a workplace.

"Earlier this year we supported the provincial government in allowing survivors to break rental leases so they could get to safety," said Johb. "Now, it's time to take the next step by allowing paid leave from work. If Bill 605 is adopted, Saskatchewan will be one of the leaders in Canada on supporting survivors."

Saskatchewan has the highest rates of domestic violence by intimate partners amongst all Canadian provinces, and survivors of domestic violence are often forced to leave their homes quickly to escape dangerous situations. Financial stability and a supportive work environment are vital for these survivors.



If Bill 605 is adopted, Saskatchewan will be one of the leaders in Canada on supporting survivors.

**LORI JOHB** | CHAIR, SFL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE



SaskCrowns provincial campaign manager Barb Byers says the petition to stop Bill 40 is crucial to prevent the sell off of crown corporations.

## CIVIC ACTION



# SASK CROWNS PETITION MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

SASK. CROWNS is a group of citizens who have launched a petition calling on the provincial government to hold a referendum if it wants to sell-off or wind-up any Crown corporation. To force such a vote, the petition needs over 100,000 registered voters in Saskatchewan to sign.

“From the start we knew this petition effort would require a lot of hard work from people across the province,” said Barb Byers, the Sask. Crowns provincial campaign manager.

“What we didn’t know was that the Sask. Party government would so quickly retreat from Bill 40 after only a couple months of

getting signatures,” she added.

In late August, Brad Wall announced that his government would consider repealing Bill 40, the law that allows the government to sell 49 percent of any Crown without a voter referendum. In October, Wall announced through a Facebook video that he had heard people’s concerns and would repeal Bill 40.

However, only a couple days later it was revealed the government would only amend parts of the bill without removing the provisions to allow the windup and privatization of Crowns.

“This latest flip-flop from the Sask. Party government means our petition is more im-

portant than ever. We need to double-down on our province-wide campaign to get the number of signatures required to hold a referendum.

“Our Crowns are still very much in danger of being privatized and we need to protect them,” said Byers. “I encourage everyone to think of themselves as the leaders of this petition campaign. Don’t wait for someone else to plan a day of action, or ask you to be involved. Contact me, or visit [www.saskcrowns.ca](http://www.saskcrowns.ca), and take the initiative to get this thing signed.”

Contact the group at [info@saskcrowns.ca](mailto:info@saskcrowns.ca) or call (306) 384-2000.



# IN BRIEF

## IBEW members reject gov't 3.5% rollback

THE UNION, which represents nearly 1,800 workers at SaskPower, has sent a strong message to the Sask. Party government about its 3.5 percent wage rollback mandate. Through a mail-in vote with a large turnout, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers' members soundly defeated the proposal.

Sask. Party Finance Minister Donna Harpauer said "collective bargaining with public-sector unions will continue but 'it doesn't look promising'" to local media following the release of the IBEW results.

Speaking to CBC Saskatchewan, IBEW Local 2067 Business Manager Jason Tibbs said, "at this point we're hoping to get back to the table and achieve a fair memorandum of agreement that can be supported by our membership."

The rollback is the Sask. Party government's plan to pick-pocket hard-working Saskatchewan people in an effort to pay for the provincial government's ballooning debt and massive deficit.

"Saskatchewan workers did not create this financial mess – the Sask. Party government did," said SFL president Larry Hubich.

"Instead of stealing from Saskatchewan families, the Sask. Party government should cancel their expensive P3 and privatization schemes, expand the scope of Crown corporations, and open the books on their various scandals – including the GTH debacle."

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

<b>FEB. 2-3</b>	RDLC Equity & Human Rights Conference	Regina
<b>MARCH 8</b>	International Women's Day	
<b>MARCH 9</b>	RDLC Awards Banquet	Regina
<b>MARCH 21</b>	International Day for Elimination of Racism	
<b>MARCH 22</b>	World Water Day	

Follow the SFL on Facebook and Twitter!

SKFedLabour | @SKFedLabour

## We found the Key... Solidarity!



Since being locked out on May 21, 2017, the Direct Care Workers (DCWs) of Variety Place have been working to return to work so they can provide safe, reliable care to their participants and residents. They stood strong to achieve a fair general wage increase.

We are pleased to announce that as of Sunday, July 30, 2017 at 2:22 pm DCWs have been back on the job for the participants of Variety Place.

DCWs were able to force the Employer to end the lockout when they cast their votes in favour of accepting the tentative agreement.

We want to thank our participants, their families and our community for their support during this 11 week lock out.

Variety Place Direct Care Workers



Stronger Together

SEIUWEST.CA

## Thanks from SEIU-West

THE LOCK OUT of Variety Place Direct Care Workers (DCWs) in Outlook, Saskatchewan may seem like a lifetime ago, but it's still real and fresh to those workers who lived this experience for eleven long weeks.

These DCWs provided personal care, life skills, aids for daily living to clients with physical, emotional and intellectual disabilities. They were (and still are) their clients' surrogate family and have built incredible relationships with clients' families as well.

We achieved a collective agreement that addresses many of the standards that should be taken for granted: duty to accommodate; joint union management meetings; and improvement of leave provisions, among others. We were also successful in negotiating a general wage increase that will raise their wages over \$18.00/hour which was a benchmark that the members were hoping to achieve.

Thousands of dollars in donations came in, so many of you sent messages of support, walked the picket line at the 4-way stop in Outlook and provided water and goodies for the locked out workers. As much as we tried to keep track, we simply couldn't list every single person or union that supported us.

So this is our huge THANK YOU to the members of the Saskatchewan labour movement and to those not yet unionized. To family and friends and to each one of you. Your support during these long 11 weeks was incredible, it kept us going. We relied on your support and solidarity to keep us strong.

The Community-Based Organization sector is the barrier against the loss of our provincial social safety net, but it is woefully underfunded. If we could ask you to do anything going forward, remember that this sector needs stable funding from government, not budgetary scraps.

We know you have our back... and we have yours!