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Race to the bottom?
 There's a solution

 **UNIFOR**
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Unifor.org/WorkplaceChanges

Unifor has launched a new campaign pushing for updated employment standards and labour laws to deal with today's reality of precarious work. See also today's centrespread pullout poster on precarious work.

Unifor addresses precarious work

Unifor is proposing sweeping changes to Ontario employment standards and labour laws to better reflect the reality of modern work in an era of precarious, low-paying part-time jobs, and to give more workers a fair chance to form a union.

"Work today is becoming increasingly precarious. For more and more Ontarians, particularly young workers, the prospect of a job with regular hours – or even enough hours to support a family – seems out of reach," Unifor Ontario Regional Director Katha Fortier said.

Unifor released its submission to the Ontario government's Changing Workplace Review publicly on the opening day of the annual Ontario Economic Summit. Fortier and Economist Jim Stanford attended the Summit.

No Frills deal reached

Unifor members of Local 414 have reached a tentative agreement with No Frills grocery stores. The unit includes 1,265 workers at 19 stores across Ontario.

"We continue to break new ground within the retail sector," said Christine Connor, President of Unifor Local 414.

"Details of the deal will be made available once it is

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Unifor optimistic about Bombardier's future

The delay in delivery of streetcars should not put good jobs at risk, says Unifor.

In October, Bombardier Transportation advised the Toronto Transit Commission that the delivery schedule of the new streetcars will not be fully met.

The streetcars are built at Bombardier's Thunder Bay facility, which is employs

1,200 people, 900 of whom are members of Unifor Local 1075.

"Unifor is optimistic that there are ways to improve productivity. We have some innovative ideas and are discussing those with the company," said Andy Savela, Unifor National Representative.

The TTC voted October 29 to sue Bombardier for

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Ratifications

Local 8300, Shepherds

About 140 members of Unifor Local 8300 working at the Shepherds of Good home homeless shelter in Ottawa have ratified a new contract providing wage increases of 1.5 percent in each of three years, and other improvements.

There is also a signing bonus of \$300, plus 50-cent wage increases each year for case managers, and a 25-cent increase for maintenance employees.

The employer also agreed to pay \$1,000 a year to provide for a Unifor Paid Education Leave program for the members. There is also a \$125 annual boot allowance, and a uniforms provision for maintenance and cleaning staff.

There were also language changes dealing with such issues as temporary vacancies, classification changes and part-time employees.



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SJF Mexican journalist safety project already having a positive impact

A Unifor Social Justice Fund project to help protect journalists in Mexico, one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a journalist, has already begun to revitalize their union.

The project began in the spring, and continues for three years. With funding from the SJF, the Sindicato Nacional de Redactores de la Prensa (SNRP), which represents journalists in the country, held meetings across Mexico over the summer to talk to members about the changes they need to stay safe.

Participants in those meetings will gather together in Mexico City in late November to compare notes, and come up with a handbook

for union activists to enhance journalist safety.

The effort has pumped new energy and optimism the SNRP, a longstanding union in Mexico that has suffered in the face of repeated attacks on journalists, but now feels hopeful about the future, Peruvian journalist Zuliana Lainez reported to the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ).

"This wouldn't have been possible without the help of Unifor," said Lainez.

The project is being administered by the IFJ. Lainez attended Unifor's Media Council in June, where she participated in a panel discussion and gave the keynote address.



Mexican journalists discuss safety.

Nine journalists have been killed in Mexico this year. Since 1992, only one person has been convicted for killing a journalist, making Mexico one of the riskiest countries to be a journalist.

Unifor is participating in an IFJ campaign to fight such impunity with which journalists are killed. You can follow the campaign on Twitter at #endimpunity.

>> Continued from "No Frills deal reached" on page 1

ratified by the members."

Ratification meetings are ongoing all this week.

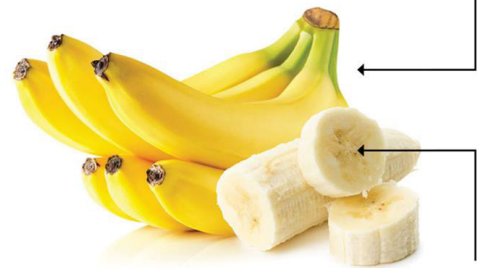
Retail is the largest and fastest growing sector in Canada's economy. But it is also the industry that pays the lowest wages, has the highest turnover and provides the fewest hours of work.

"This agreement builds on the momentum Unifor members have created in the retail sector, and it demonstrates that we are the union that is changing the lives of our members in retail," said Unifor National President Jerry Dias.

Unifor is one of the country's largest retail worker unions, with more than 20,000 members working in supermarkets,

Looking for a good deal at **no frills?** So are we.

Loblaws' President Galen Weston Jr.'s **weekly salary**: over \$19,000.



No Frills employee's **yearly salary**: just over \$16,000.



Unifor has made the needs of retail workers a priority for the union.

pharmacies, appliance stores, and other retail shops across Canada.

"Our members are continually raising the floor

in retail," said Dias.

"We have a lot to be proud of in this new agreement."

>> Continued from “Unifor addresses precarious work” on page 1

Stanford took part in a panel on The Changing Nature of Work.

The submission focuses on Ontario laws because the province is conducting a review of its labour laws, but the ideas included in it could apply across the country.

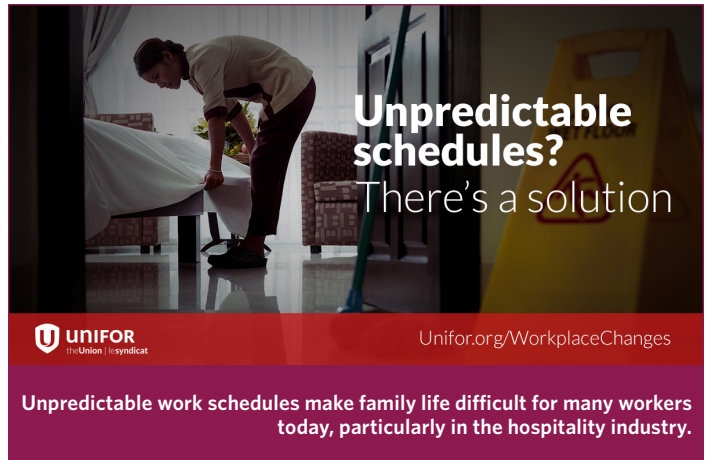
In its 156-page submission to the Review, Unifor makes a total of 43 specific recommendations, reflecting input from Unifor locals across Ontario, many of which appeared before the commissions in public consultation meetings over the summer and fall.

Unifor’s full submission includes several proposed changes to the Employment Standards Act to protect

workers in precarious and irregular jobs. Unifor’s proposals include: scheduling rules, more opportunity for full-time work, making employers responsible for temp agency actions, benefits for part-timers, and a pro-active approach to enforcing employment standards.

Labour Relations Act changes would modernize union certification and first contract negotiation, including electronic union voting, certification votes in neutral locations, first contract arbitration and successor union rights when contracted services are flipped.

Other recommendations include developing sector-wide work standards for both union and non-union workers so companies can’t



compete on the basis to ever-lower pay and benefits.

“Too many workers today face a future of one bad, insecure job after another, often holding down more than one job at any one time as they try to make enough money. They are so dependent on those jobs that they are hesitant to speak out, as is their right, for fear they’ll lose what

work they have,” Fortier said.

“The barriers to joining with co-workers to form a union thwart far too many workers. And a race to the bottom across whole sectors of our economy makes getting ahead all the more difficult.”

Unifor’s full submission is available at www.unifor.org/WorkplaceChanges.

>> Continued from “Unifor optimistic about Bombardier’s future...” on page 1

the delayed deliveries, but did not remove the company from its list of preferred suppliers.

TTC CEO Andy Byford said the new streetcars are “fabulous,” and the only issue is that he wants more of them.

Bombardier is an important Ontario employer, with almost 2,200 highly skilled employees and more than 1,000 suppliers.

“We are eager to ensure Bombardier’s success,” said Savela. “At a time when Canada is fighting hard to protect and create good-paying jobs, we need to ensure we do all we can to maximize the benefits that result from Bombardier’s operations in Ontario.”

Unifor is optimistic that

Bombardier, the provincial government and the TTC can find a way to address concerns and secure a bright future for Bombardier, and the thousands of Ontarians whose livelihoods depend on Bombardier’s success.

“Our members are very proud to produce world-class vehicles, and have been particularly proud of the tremendously positive reception the new streetcars have found amongst TTC riders,” said Savela.

“We understand the TTC’s concerns and the need to address them. We’re asking that those concerns be addressed in a manner that does not undermine the long-term economic benefits that come from the success of Bombardier Transportation.”

Alberta NDP budget invests in education, jobs

Strong education investments at all levels were among the highlights of the Alberta NDP’s first budget.

The spending announced in the budget will go towards hiring support staff and teachers who will translate into higher quality public education. Government investment in K-12 education will grow with student enrolment to \$8.1 billion by 2017.

“The Rachel Notley government gets it: good public education is a long-term investment for Alberta,” said Don Boucher, Unifor Alberta Area Director.

The Alberta budget

also introduces a school nutritional program and a \$45 million annual investment to reduce school fees for families.

Instead of deep cuts promised by the previous government, Notley has chosen instead to maintain strong front-line services during the economic downturn. Notley’s first budget also takes supports jobs with a new “Job Creation Incentive Program” that could lead to 27,000 new jobs each year through 2017.

“The government is taking the long view of economic prosperity,” said Joie Warnock, Unifor’s Western Director.



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IN THIS ISSUE Unifor is launching a major push to update employment standards and labour laws to deal with today's reality of precarious work, and this issue includes a pullout poster on the issue. We also look at an SJF project to help Mexican journalists stay safe, and a new deal at No Frills.

Federal election challenge

This is an abridged version of a blog by Unifor National President Jerry Dias. To read the full blog, go to unifor.org/en/blog.

The clearest outcome of this historic federal election was an overwhelming call from Canadians for a change in government, and a change in direction for our country. The Liberals have been tasked with delivering progressive change.

But achieving real, lasting change is never easy – and it cannot start and stop at a ballot box.

If we want to see real change, we will need to hold the Liberals to account for their promises and to rely on the NDP to not just hold the Liberals responsible, but

to also offer their ideas for change, which will enrich and deepen the change we are able to accomplish.

The Liberals made important commitments during the election that will need to be fulfilled to create the change Canadians are so clearly craving.

Importantly, the Liberals and NDP agree on the need to address many issues, including: the Canada Pension Plan public infrastructure, tax reform, Medicare, child care, greenhouse gases, support for key industries, revoking the Harper government's attacks on unions, labour rights, and non-governmental organizations and a public inquiry into murdered and missing



Unifor Local 200 member Tracey Ramsey, and newly elected NDP Member of Parliament, is surrounded by supporters election night.

Aboriginal women.

That's an ambitious to-do list. Getting it done will need the involvement and vigilance of the NDP.

Surely there is not just an opportunity for the Liberals

and NDP to work together, there is a responsibility for Justin Trudeau and Tom Mulcair to act in the interests of Canadians – and that means working together.