

WE STAND TOGETHER IN A TIME OF CRISIS

The current economic crisis is having a serious impact on many Canadians. The same people who created this financial mess, and got very rich in the process, say that workers must be the first to sacrifice. We reject that because it is not a solution. Employers need to know that they cannot go after wages, benefits or working conditions without a fight. Politicians need to know that we want action to protect jobs and repair the social safety net for working families.

It's not that we are afraid of change – **we don't want their version of change.** We want Canada, and the world, to have a sustainable economy which provides good jobs and a decent quality of life for all.

SOLIDARITY CHECKLIST

✓ **DON'T BLAME OURSELVES – OR OTHER WORKERS**

We didn't create this crisis. We weren't the ones making million dollar bonuses, outsourcing production, or designing immoral speculation schemes. Over the last two decades, real wages have fallen behind increases in productivity and the cost of living.

✓ **REMEMBER HOW THE RULES WERE CHANGED**

It was corporate lobbyists who called for deregulation and cuts. Only a few years ago, over 80% of the jobless were able to get unemployment insurance benefits. Today it is less than a third. Someone changed the rules. The same is true with trade deals that allow companies to shift production away with no penalties. Or when governments spend millions on goods that aren't made in Canada.

✓ **ASK TOUGH QUESTIONS ABOUT "THE BIG PICTURE"**

When the wealthy tell us "there is no alternative" to cuts or concessions, they are not being honest. Choices are made every day – like making corporate tax cuts instead of investing in public services. Deregulation, privatization and free trade deals were all part of the corporate agenda – along with weakening workers rights. They told us that prosperity was ensured, and the social safety net could be slashed without risk.

✓ **PUT FAIR RULES IN PLACE**

Whether it is fair wage policies, card-check certification, or employment standards - business needs to be governed by clear, enforceable rules of conduct. Strong laws at the local, national and international level are required to counter the reckless greed of global capital.

✓ **WORK HARD TO RENEW SOLIDARITY**

Just looking after our own members will not be enough to get us through these difficult times. Wage standards, benefits, pensions – when they are taken away from anyone we are all at risk. Helping each other in key struggles will be essential if we want to uphold the quality of life in greater Toronto. And helping other workers organize into unions will make us all stronger.

✓ **STAND TOGETHER FOR WHAT WE BELIEVE IN!**

Generations before us sacrificed to build unions and decent working conditions. Powerful voices often told them not to. The labour movement in Canada has a solid vision for the kind of society we want. It is about more than just defending what we have, it includes defending each other and rejecting anything that can divide us. We want an economy that provides good jobs and a decent quality of life for all. To get there, we will all need to stand together for what we believe in.



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