

National Advisory Committee on Pensions – March 2010

I would like to begin by thanking CUPE P.E.I. Executive for their support of my application to the National Advisory Committee. I am honored to represent our members and look forward to serving on this very important committee.

The National Pension Committee met for the All Committee meetings in Montreal from March 29th thru to April 1st, 2010. On Tuesday, March 30th, a joint meeting was held for all the committees with the remaining days reserved for individual committee sessions.

From a pension perspective the highlight from the joint meeting was a presentation from Joel Harding of the CLC outlining their campaign regarding pension reform in Canada. Following this presentation, each member of the pension committee joined in with another committee to discuss how pension issues affect their group.

The pension committee meetings began with a brief orientation for new members that included a review of Terms of Reference as well as an overview of CUPE pension policies.

The CUPE Pension Campaign was the focus of the discussions. Some of the main points of the campaign are:

- Increase the CPP benefit to 50% replacement rate.
- Increase the GIS and OAS.
- Improve Survivor benefits.
- Increase the CPP Death benefits from \$2500. To \$5000.
- Increases to the CPP should be mandatory not a voluntary supplement.
- Improved regulations to protect workplace pension plans from bankruptcy, high-risk investments, and employer under funding.

The remaining discussions centered on the CPP review being conducted by the federal and provincial Finance ministers. Our committee is following this process very intently to ensure the position of CUPE is recognized. A conference call between committee members is scheduled to be held after the Finance ministers meeting in late May, 2010.

Our committee recognizes this is a very critical time for pension plans throughout Canada. We feel this is an opportunity for CUPE members to lobby for change in our National pension system which will benefit and improve the lives of millions of working Canadians.

Respectfully submitted
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