



Charlottetown Area Office, 100 Capital Drive, Charlottetown, PEI C1E 1E7

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 4TH, 2010

**FREE Collective Bargaining Summit this Friday in Summerside
Strategy Needed to Protect Free Collective Bargaining - CUPE**

Charlottetown – “The Canadian Union of Public Employees’ (CUPE), Prince Edward Island Division, is sponsoring a “Free Collective Bargaining Summit” all day Friday, March 5th, 2010 in Summerside, at the Causeway Bay Inn. We intend to come out of this Summit with a very clear direction from the participants on a strategy going forward to protect our Collective Bargaining Rights here on PEI,” says Milo Murray, President of CUPE Prince Edward Island.

CUPE represents approximately 2,400 public sector employees on Prince Edward Island, in education, health, municipalities, the University of PEI, group homes, nursing homes and Island EMS. Other Public Sector Unions on the Island, as well as representatives from CUPE New Brunswick, have been invited and will be participating in the Summit as well.

“The issue of Free Collective Bargaining has been on the radar for Union members on PEI generally since Premier Ghiz announced last December 1st that he was ordering his MLA’s and senior bureaucrats to take a two-year wage freeze. The message to Public Sector employees, at that time, was loud and clear, in that we were being expected to take the same.

However, we want to be equally clear, that it was and remains CUPE’s view, that this effort by the Premier to negotiate in the media, while inappropriate, was also a wake-up call to action for all Public Sector employees on Prince Edward Island.

Public Sector workers must now prepare for the challenges at the negotiating table and specifically for workers to stand up and protect their right to freely and collectively bargain our contracts, without having them artificially imposed by government. It doesn’t matter if that occurs through draconian legislation like the infamous 7.5% rollback of 1994, or in more subtle ways like putting out a press release and announcing wage freezes for MLAs.

We are looking forward to some great presentations, as well as interesting discussions from the dozens of delegates who will be attending our very first ‘Free Collective Bargaining Summit’”, concluded Murray.

For more information, or an interview, please contact:

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