

# CONVENTION NOTES

April 29, 2009



## PSAC RENEWS COMMITMENT TO THINK PUBLIC

Three years ago, Convention delegates voted overwhelmingly in favour of a PSAC policy that reaffirmed our strong support for quality public services and our opposition to practices such as privatization that would destroy both access to public services and the quality.

The context in which we are fighting to defend quality public services has changed in the last three years. The current economic crisis has brought to light the perils of under-regulation in the financial sector, the extent of corporate greed and the fragile nature of workers' rights and job security.

The current job crisis in the private sector is being used by some as an opportunity to pit private sector workers against public sector workers.

The federal government is using the economic crisis as an excuse to underfund, privatize or eliminate public services and programs, making the task of defending public services even more challenging today.

“We need worker-friendly and people-friendly governments at all levels. We need to talk about politics and be partisan. We need to talk to our neighbours and be active in our communities.”

*Delegate Sam Wiese*

Convention delegates unanimously renewed our union's commitment to work together to defend quality public services and programs. Our renewed **Think Public** platform has four cornerstones.

**Regulation:** We will campaign against deregulation and for strong regulations that put people and the public interest first, before corporations and profit.

**Redress:** We will campaign for public services that help redress the poverty and inequality gaps, and that **Lead the way** for quality public services

help achieve equality for all.

**Reinvestment:** We will campaign to ensure that public investments include social infrastructure, like child care and health care. We will campaign to ensure that public funds are being invested to keep public infrastructure and services public. We will campaign against the public financing of public-private-partnerships and other forms of privatization that are more costly and don't work. We will also campaign to ensure that women and other equity-seeking groups benefit from the jobs created to rebuild our infrastructure, both physical and social.

**Respect:** We will campaign for public services that respect and include the diverse voices of Canadians and for public investments that enable decision-makers to be responsive to these voices. We will campaign for public services that bind communities together. We will campaign for respect for human rights and workers' rights, including the right to free collective bargaining.

“People should know that regulations were not in place to protect Canadians and the resources were not in place to protect Canadians. People should know that for a year there was no time allowed for pre-operation inspections and sanitation inspections in Ontario and Quebec and audits were cancelled.”

*Delegate Bob Kingston on the listeriosis outbreak in 2008.*

Our defence of quality public services is interwoven into the fabric of our union. When we bargain new collective agreements, when we educate, when we organize new members, when we communicate with our members and the public, when we lobby political representatives, when we work with our labour and **Traçons la voie** pour des services publics de qualité



social movement partners, when we build solidarity among the structures of our union, when we build our alliances with workers around the world, we are working to defend the quality public services that are essential to a strong economy and an inclusive society.

## Harper wins world's worst boss title

“Everyone thinks they have the world's worst boss,” according to Canadian Labour Congress President Ken Georgetti. “Thanks to Stephen Harper, federal public sector workers actually have the worst one!”

On Tuesday, Georgetti related that at the recent G-20 summit, many leaders were prepared to meet with labour representatives - but not Harper.

“Workers are being blamed for the economic crisis; not CEOs and not bankers,” said Georgetti. “The very people who caused it are being asked to develop the solutions, but the long-term solutions are going to come from workers who need to take back our democracy. We're the real shareholders and the owners.”

Georgetti urged PSAC members to continue their lobbying work and to demand better governing from their MPs.

## Think Public videos premiere at Convention

PSAC members at Convention saw the first of the Think Public videos that will be shown over the week.

Each video features our members in their workplaces, providing quality public services to Canadians in different parts of the country. They warn of privatization's negative effects on unionized workers and on Canadians.

“These videos are only the beginning,” said National President John Gordon, as he introduced the first video, which focuses on the graving dock in Esquimalt, B.C. “We hope to make more of these videos for our **Think Public** project.”

Gordon invited members at Convention who want to tell stories about the great work they do for a **Think Public** video to fill out a form at the PSAC booth in Ballroom D.

## Convention debates

### Constitution resolutions

**CS-26A** – Full funding for regional conventions. The committee's recommendation of concurrence was defeated because it did not receive the necessary majority. It takes a vote of two-thirds to amend the PSAC Constitution.

**CS-71:** referred back to the Committee on a question of costing. The resolution calls for strike pay to be increased from \$50 per day to \$75 per day.

**CS-91:** adopted. Entitlement to delegates to the PSAC convention will now be based on any month during the 12 month period before the convention. This resolution will increase PSAC dues by one cent per member per month or 0.0002%.

**CS-21** – Funding for and inclusion of regional health and safety committees in the PSAC Constitution. The committee's recommendation of concurrence was defeated.

### General resolutions

**GEN092A:** referred back to the Committee on a question of costing. The resolution calls for a union lobbying campaign to oppose the privatization of federal labs and raise awareness of the need and importance of public science and research.

### Collective bargaining resolutions

**NEG033:** adopted. PSAC will pursue negotiations with the Employer so that members can continue to receive their pay when on union leave without pay, with the Employer invoicing PSAC directly for such leave.

**NEG058:** adopted. PSAC will pursue an agreement with the National Joint Council to reactivate Conferences of the North, including funds for reasonable direct membership representation. This resolution will increase PSAC dues by 0.0002%.

**NEG045A:** referred back to the Committee on a question of costing.

**NEG076:** adopted. PSAC will start researching workplace privacy to produce model bargaining language to protect members' privacy.

**NEG079:** adopted. PSAC will work to raise employer awareness on the duty to accommodate, as well as conduct membership education, mobilize and lobby. This resolution will increase PSAC dues by 0.0009%.

**NEG042A:** adopted. PSAC will negotiate with Treasury Board to rewrite a term employment policy that is fair for pregnant women.