



May 28, 2026

Message to Federal Government: The Right to Strike is Non-Negotiable

In April, the Federal Government quietly launched consultations on Canada's federal labour policy, the labour relations framework, and the *Canada Labour Code*. The law governs collective bargaining, strikes and lockouts, workplace protections and labour relation in federally regulated sectors. Despite having an inadequate amount of time – barely more than a month – to explore the complex issues involved, CUPW made a full submission, along with many other trade unions and the Canadian Labour Congress.

While our submission covers a wide range of issues, our core message is simple:

For collective bargaining to work, the Federal Government must stop intervening in bargaining disputes and respect labour's fundamental right to strike. The right to strike is non-negotiable – even when they are politically or economically inconvenient.

Strikes and Worker Power

Workers form trade unions to build collective power in opposition to their employers. The most effective way for workers to exercise that power is the withdrawal of their collective labour.

The purpose of a strike is to disrupt business as usual. Strikes are meant to hurt employers where it counts – the pocketbook – and to pressure employers towards meaningful negotiations and agreements. Canada's labour relations framework recognizes this. It is also an internationally recognized right, as affirmed by the recent ruling of the International Court of Justice.

Yet when governments signal their willingness to end strikes, employers have no reason to negotiate. They know they can wait things out. They can simply refuse to take the union seriously because the Government will bail them out. It also kicks the can down the road on issues that can only be resolved through bargaining. Over the last two years, we've seen this play out at the ports, on the railways, at the airports, and at the postal service.

The Government's repeated abuse of Section 107 to end strikes has completely undermined the collective bargaining process and tilted the playing field towards employers. That must end.

We will publish our submission to our website once it is fully translated.

In Solidarity,

Jan Simpson
National President

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