

1375, boul. St. Laurent Blvd., Ottawa, ON K1G 0Z7

Tel./Tél. : (613) 237-1590 Fax/Télec. : (613) 237-5508 Toll free/Sans frais : (844) 237-1590

cupemail@cupe.ca/courriel@scfp.ca – cupe.ca/scfp.ca

November 5, 2022

A message from Mark Hancock and Candace Rennick on behalf of your National Executive Board

Friday was day one of your political protest – and it was one for the history books.

As 55,000 front-line CUPE education workers across Ontario, you have shown incredible resolve. You made your voice heard at 125 sites all across the province. And you brought your message – delivered by more than 10,000 members and allies – to the very seat of government power at Queen’s Park.

It was powerful.

Your courageous actions led the news. Parents and allies filled our lines showing their support. On Monday, even more workers will swell our numbers, joining our protest. We feel more confident than ever: we will win.

You should be so proud of what you have begun. And you need to know that you are not alone. You have the entirety of your national union – 715,000 CUPE members strong – in your corner. More than words of solidarity, your fellow CUPE members are planning actions. And we’re hearing the same desire to get involved from across the labour movement.

We know what it feels like to be in your position, with the eyes of the province on you and the government abusing their power to threaten and intimidate you.

Bill 28 is the nuclear option. It’s an attack on our fundamental rights and the rights of every Canadian. We sat next to Laura Walton and your central bargaining committee in the gallery at Queen’s Park on Thursday afternoon as the Ford government rammed the legislation through. Conservative MPs laughed as they did so.

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MARK HANCOCK

National President/Président national

CANDACE RENNICK

National Secretary-Treasurer/Secrétaire-trésorière nationale

PATRICK GLOUTNEY, FRED HAHN, JUDY HENLEY, SHERRY HILLIER, LEE-ANN KALEN

General Vice-Presidents/Vice-présidences générales

But there is strength in numbers – and Bill 28 has united the labour movement like never before. It's important you feel that unity.

So many unions and their front-line members have your back. Today we learned that the British Columbia Teachers' Federation has pledged \$1 million to support you. This is just one example of the growing movement your protest has ignited.

"One day longer, one day stronger" has been a refrain among union members for more than 100 years. It's as true today as ever. Let that refrain power you on Monday, and Tuesday, and throughout the week.

You have shown workers across the country – and all Canadians – that you can stand up to bullies. And your leadership will move mountains to make sure that you have the support you need to do so with confidence.

In solidarity,

Handwritten signatures of Mark Hancock and Candace Rennick. Mark Hancock's signature is on the left, and Candace Rennick's signature is on the right.

MARK HANCOCK
National President

CANDACE RENNICK
National Secretary-Treasurer