

Convention sets priorities for the coming year

VANCOUVER—At CUPE BC's 47th annual Convention, delegates debated and passed more than 50 resolutions to guide activities in the coming year and adopted policy positions on the pressing issues of the day.

Resolutions come from locals, district councils, CUPE BC committees and task forces, and the CUPE BC executive board. They reflect the diversity and breadth of CUPE.

The CUPE BC 2010-2011 Action Plan was approved, providing overall strategic direction. The plan reaffirms a commitment to solidarity within CUPE and with the broader labour movement and a continued focus on strengthening links with communities and supporting local economies. CUPE BC will continue work to protect public services and fight public private partnerships, to elect progressive governments, to increase the minimum wage and improve retirement security and pensions, and to support greater equality and inclusion for all workers.

Delegates adopted a comprehensive policy on tax fairness. The policy is a response to serious revenue problems at all levels of government due to tax cutting, tax shifting, and outright refusal of corporations like Catalyst Paper to pay their legally-assessed taxes.

Resolutions support strengthened capacity to advocate for members, including new education resources, a national post-secondary sector task force, training for CUPE members on college boards of governors, and holding another Champions for Public Education conference in 2012. The environment received high priority with delegates passing resolutions on reducing CUPE's carbon footprint and working to have breast cancer included as an occupational disease.

CUPE will lobby for improved funding for community social services, libraries, colleges and public schools, including an emergency resolution on the crisis in public education funding.

Delegates vowed to fight the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) and to call on the BC government to halt the task force created to change the Local Government Act, which is proposing changes that undermine democracy.

International issues were also addressed, focusing on the need for improved Haitian relief efforts and the need to restore full democracy to Haiti, as well as opposition to the Canada-Columbia Free Trade agreement. CUPE BC will also lobby government to declare water a human right.