

**NEW BRUNSWICK UNION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EMPLOYEES**

**2010 CONVENTION**

**Resolutions**

- 1) Jobs and Job Security in the Public Sector**
- 2) Non-Taxable Mileage Rate for Use of Personal Vehicle for Work Purposes**
- 3) Support Young Workers**
- 4) Make Poverty a Provincial Priority**
- 5) Environment Impact of Bottled Water**
- 6) Meaningful Action on Climate Change**
- 7) Our Economy: Towards a Sustainable Future**
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- 15) Post Secondary Education**
- 16) Community College Amalgamated Bargaining**
- 17) Enact More Effective Provincial Whistleblower Protection Legislation**

## **Resolution #1: Jobs and Job Security in the Public Sector**

**Whereas**, in response to the current financial and economic crisis, all governments no matter what their political party engaged in some combination of wage freezes and cuts, hiring freezes, job cuts, downsizing and restructuring. These deliberate attempts to reduce the size and scope of the public sector are taking place at exactly the same time when more public services and jobs are needed, and

**Whereas**, these measures have been shown to be of limited financial benefit, especially for the longer-term and they actually serve to deepen and extend the financial and economic crisis. These measures have been used over and over again by governments over the last 10 to 15 years.

**Be it Resolved:** That NBU will work with its components to:

- Strongly oppose the continued use by federal/provincial/territorial governments of cuts, reductions, downsizing and restructuring of public services and the public sector during the current financial and economic crisis;
- Continue to support all efforts to protect and expand services and jobs in the public sector;
- Continue to take all possible steps to demonstrate to all Canadians the value and enduring contributions of public services and jobs; and
- Work closely with all our social partners to ensure governments at all levels take concrete steps to reduce and eliminate the social deficits that continue to exist and grow in all parts of the country.

## **Resolution #2: Non-Taxable Mileage Rate for Use of Personal Vehicle for Work Purposes**

**Whereas**, many public services workers work in the community and use their own vehicles for that purpose, and

**Whereas**, the provincial government has not modified the basic non-taxable mileage formula for personal vehicles used for work for several years, and

**Whereas**, the cost of gas has increased markedly since the current mileage rate was set by the provincial government.

**Be it Resolved:** That the NBU will lobby the government to increase the basic non-taxable mileage rate for personal vehicles used for work purposes and the provincial government to make the necessary adjustments to its current mileage rate.

### **Resolution #3: Support for Young Workers**

**Whereas**, the demographics show that many experienced labour activists will be retiring in the next ten years and that many union political and staff vacancies could be created by this, and

**Whereas**, NBU has made a commitment to promoting and encouraging activism in young workers due in part to the union's aging population of activists, and the fear that our union values could disappear without the commitment of young workers to the union movement, and

**Whereas**, the commitment to the labour movement comes from having a place within the NBU with decision making power, and the ability to learn activism and unionism skills.

**Be it Resolved:** That the NBU will support young workers in learning activism, labour skills and communicating amongst themselves across the province, and

Support in creating young workers forums, positions and educational courses to ensure the labour movement's future and past is protected.

### **Resolution #4: Make Poverty Reduction a Provincial Priority**

**Whereas**, inequality and poverty rates in Canada have increased dramatically in the last twenty years, and

**Whereas**, In New Brunswick (2006 Census) 13.8% of New Brunswickers live in poverty; 45.4% of single mothers live in poverty, 10.4% of children under the age of 18 live in poverty and 11% of seniors live in poverty in our province, and

**Whereas**, the provincial government have taken the first steps through its poverty reduction strategy in 2009.

**Be it Resolved:** That the NBU will demand the provincial government maintain poverty reduction a priority, and

Demand the province to continue to address the inadequate and impoverishing social assistance rates; to provide investment in public programs to improve access to affordable housing and transit, and

Demand an increase to the minimum wage and improve access and benefits to Employment Insurance, and

Demand closure of the economic gap with First Nations' communities, and

Advocate the development of a national, publicly-funded child care program.

## **Resolution #5: Environment Impact of Bottled Water**

**Whereas**, safe and accessible drinking water is essential to human life, and

**Whereas**, the privatization of water threatens access to public water, and

**Whereas**, plastic water bottles are responsible for environmental damage, and

**Whereas**, bottled water is an unregulated product.

**Be it Resolved:** That the NBU will actively urge all of its members to use public rather than private drinking water and lobby provincial government to implement regulations for the safety and environmental impact of bottled water.

## **Resolution #6: Meaningful Action on Climate Change**

**Whereas**, NBU has identified climate change has a priority issue and addressing climate change is critical to our economic, and environmental well-being, and

**Whereas**, the labour movement has a vital role to play in shaping policy to ensure a just transition to a greener economy for workers and the development of decent, quality green jobs, and

**Whereas**, public services are essential in the fight against climate change, including those services which protect and conserve our environment, protect endangered species, manage resources, and enforce compliance with environmental regulations, and

**Whereas**, public services also work to reduce poverty and protect those most vulnerable to the impact of climate change, and

**Whereas**, public services are under threat from ongoing budget and staffing cuts, and privatization schemes, and

**Whereas**, the federal and provincial governments continue to refuse to take any meaningful action to address climate change and are slashing funding for science-based research on climate change and appear to be muzzling climate scientists by restricting media access.

**Be it Resolved:** That the NBU will continue to demand from the provincial government meaningful action on climate change, including binding targets, and will work with others in the province who are also demanding action from the provincial government, and

Include in their call for action the principles of just transition (skill development and training and the creation of decent, quality green jobs) and social justice (reduction of poverty and funding for adaptation), and

Continue to speak out against the erosion of public services which are essential in the fight against climate change, using the NBU publications, Cool Comforts I and Cool Comforts II as its guides.

## **Resolution #7: Our Economy: Towards a Sustainable Future**

**Whereas**, one of the provincial government's moral mission is to provide quality, universal public services to all New Brunswickers, and

**Whereas**, there are currently only two sources of revenue for the province that fund essential public services, taxation and transfer payments from the federal government, and

**Whereas**, the current provincial and federal government are intent on reducing taxes and limiting transfer payments, and

**Whereas**, the Province requires a sustainable economic future that will provide:

- Necessary and relevant services for New Brunswickers
- Potential for economic development and employment growth opportunities
- Foundations for making the Province and its committees viable, and

**Whereas**, it is recognized that reduction of taxes and transfer payments will result in a decline of the quality of service and a likely reduction of public sector jobs.

**Be it Resolved:** That the NBU engage in a public and political campaign to draw attention to the relationship between taxes, transfer payments and quality public services and jobs.

## **Resolution #8: Wage Equity**

**Whereas**, the uses with female prevalence are often underestimated and underpaid,

**Whereas**, approximately 70% of the women and 14% of the men on the job market in New Brunswick occupy of the stations with female prevalence,

**Whereas**, in 2009, the government of New Brunswick adopted a law on wage equity for the public sector but not for the private sector,

**Whereas** 67% of the women and 78% of the men employed in New Brunswick work in the private sector,

**Whereas**, wage equity is a right of the person and should also apply to everyone,

**Be it resolved:** that the NBU supports the Coalition for the wage equity of New Brunswick in its steps to obtain a law on wage equity in the private sector.

Submitted by Lydia Jaillet

## **Resolution #9: Good Government**

**Whereas**, there exists a democratic malaise in the province where voter turnout has declined, younger workers of our communities are not voting

**Whereas**, in 2009-2010 the citizenship became engaged in the knowledge that our democratic process in the province is dysfunctional, and

**Whereas**, the successful push back of the proposed sale of our public energy utility, NB Power to Hydro Quebec forced us to recognize that: people power works, the truly powerful in the province must be accountable to the public and that “politics as usual” in New Brunswick is no longer acceptable.

**Be it Resolved:** That the NBU utilizes available resources to remain on the front line of the movement of the members of our communities and work together in the Coalition of New Brunswickers: Public Power for the Public Good.

## **Resolution #10: Creating Revenue**

**Whereas**, the Government will chose to continue to cut our services that contribute to New Brunswickers’ health, safety and security before considering:

- Introduction of tolls on the Trans Canada (local exemptions can be implemented).
- Controlling the amount of double dipping that occurs at the upper echelons of the public service, spending taxpayers’ money unnecessarily and tying up jobs for the next generation.
- Utilizing the investment potential of pension funds to raise necessary money in the Province rather than relying on P3s to replace much needed infrastructure.
- Developing multidisciplinary community health centres that provide proven comprehensive health care at a cost benefit for the current delivery model.
- Capturing profits from wind energy

**Whereas**, many New Brunswickers will experience reductions in services relating to their safety, health, education and quality of life as a result of the Government focusing on the old recipe for addressing an economic downturn. Attacks on services and public sector jobs and wages do not solve the sources of the economic strife to:

- Educate the membership and the general public to viable options/solutions to the Province’s need for revenue.
- Provide leadership within the Province on these matters.

**Be it Resolved:** That the NBU will pursue the Government of New Brunswick to utilize available monies in the Province before making cuts to vital front line services.

## **Resolution #11: Common Wealth for the Common Good**

**Whereas**, the province has had little difficulty utilizing tax dollars to support failing enterprises, Shippagan Caisse Populaire, Atcon, etc, but wants New Brunswickers to believe that there is a lack of money, and

**Whereas**, the government spent over 200M in tax dollars to prop up the private sector in 2008-2009, and intends to use tax cuts and service reduction to punish New Brunswickers for the economic downturn.

**Be it Resolved:** That the NBU will continue its efforts to educate its members and our neighbours that we must continue to keep our government(s)accountable to the public and provide leadership for its citizens.

## **Resolution #12: Retirement Security for All**

**Whereas**, New Brunswick is facing a retirement security crisis, and

**Whereas**, 72% of workers in New Brunswick do not have a workplace pension plan and over 30% of New Brunswick households cannot afford to save for retirement, and

**Whereas**, defined benefit pension plans provide workers with a predictable retirement income that contributes to dignity and respect in retirement, and

**Whereas**, the majority of NBU workers are members of a defined benefit workplace pension plans, which are under extreme pressure and attack.

**Be it Resolved:** That the NBU work in coalition with workers with and without workplace pension plans towards securing dignified and respectful retirement incomes for all, including:

- An increase in OAS/GIS benefits to ensure seniors have minimum incomes above the poverty line.
- Expansion of CPP to allow workers to earn up to 50% of the average wage and require employers without workplace pension plans to pay additional premiums to improve future benefits available to their workers.

## **Resolution #13: Supporting, Modernizing and Expanding Canada's Public Health Care**

**Whereas**, Medicare has achieved much in the last decade with marginal cost increases relative to the overall economy and from 1996 to 2006 innovations and investment in the system allowed Canadians to live three years longer with a better quality of life, and

**Whereas**, we must continue to defend the principles of Canada's public Medicare system, while at the same time struggling to strengthened, modernize and expand available services.

**Be it Resolved:** That the NBU will demand provinces maintain their share of funding to fix Medicare for a generation, and

Join in the campaign for a national drug program to provide comprehensive program for all, and

Demand access to high-quality, publicly-funded and resourced long term care services, including a national home care program, and

Support the development of a national mental health strategy and expansion and improvement of community and facility-based mental health services.

### **Resolution #14: Hospital Waitlists**

**Whereas,** Allied Health Professionals provide services to New Brunswickers that are vital to their health, well being and quality of life,

**Whereas,** Allied Health services are under funded, lack resources and are chronically short staffed; resulting in extensive wait times; delayed diagnosis and treatment; excessive workloads for service providers; exacerbating illnesses, unhealthy work environments and increased potential for harm;

**Whereas,** Allied Health Professionals recognize that best practice timelines not being met, administration has become complacent with waitlists as a reality rather than a risk factor; under funding health care jeopardizes the publics' faith in the system and exposing New Brunswickers' to further risk of privatization;

**Be it resolved:** that the New Brunswick Union continue to be the watch dog for health care, promoting the importance of quality, accessible, accountable and public health care; challenge the government to address waitlist as a risk and acknowledge that they are not acceptable.

**Be it further resolved:** that the New Brunswick Union endeavor to partner with others in the labour movement to promote public awareness of the risks of waitlists and that access to a wait list is not access to health care

Submitted by:

Lisa Watters on behalf of the SHCP component

### **Resolution #15: Post Secondary Education**

**Whereas,** funding for public post secondary education has not kept up with educational needs and there is increasing proof that investment in post secondary training has a multiplier effect on the economy and government revenue.

**Be it Resolved:** That NBU will continue to lobby the provincial government to increase support to public post secondary education.

## **Resolution #16: Community College Amalgamated Bargaining**

**Whereas**, the New Brunswick Union has held certification rights providing exclusive bargaining agent status under the *Public Service Labour Relations Act* for employees working in classifications and technical grouping for the following members and bargaining units/components:

Clerical and Regulatory – since 1971  
Administrative Assistants – since 1971  
Instructional Group – since 1971  
Non-Instructional Group – since 2007

**Whereas**, the New Brunswick Union has negotiated and administered collective agreement under the *Public Service Labour Relations Act* since 1971 for administration in both official languages of the Province, without exception.

**Whereas**, the New Brunswick Union has applied for and engaged in amalgamated bargaining throughout its history to facilitate equality of treatment.

**Be it Resolved:** That the New Brunswick Union as exclusive bargaining agent for the Clerical and Regulatory, Administrative Assistant, Instructional and Non-Instructional bargaining units/components make application to the Labour and Employment Board at the time deemed appropriate to support success for amalgamation to allow for the continuation of the negotiations for one collective agreement for each of the aforementioned groups with the proposed new employer(s) under the new Part IV governance model for community colleges.

## **Resolution #17: Enact More Effective Provincial Whistleblower Protection Legislation**

**Whereas**, front line public service workers often have constructive ideas to improve service, but risk discipline or dismissal if they are seen to criticize how services are delivered, or reveal mismanagement or wrongdoing by employers, and

**Whereas**, workers have almost no protection against employer reprisal for acting as whistleblowers to protect the public interest.

**Be it Resolved:** That NBU will work to pressure the provincial government to enact more effective provincial whistleblower protection legislation for workers in the public sector.