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MEDIA RELEASE

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CUPE Ontario Launches province wide campaign Communities, Not Cuts campaign

TORONTO, ON — CUPE Ontario announced today their Communities not Cuts campaign. This province-wide initiative brings together public sector workers and communities in a fightback against the Ford Conservative government's all out attack on Ontario's public services and the workers who provide them.

"Every community, every type of work we do, every service Ontarians rely on is threatened. Today we launch our campaign to fight back alongside communities and send the Ford Conservatives a message. A message that we are united with others in our efforts to protect jobs, protect our communities and protect the vital public services our members, our friends and families rely on every single day." Stated Fred Hahn, President of CUPE Ontario.

Joined by front-line workers and provincial leaders at a Queen's Park press conference, Hahn emphasized that the Ford Conservatives' cuts to public services is making life harder for all Ontarians and now they are also attacking the workers who are doing their provide services under the strain of devastating cuts.

"Our members work hard everyday, in healthcare, education, universities, social services and in municipalities all across this province," said Hahn. "Those jobs have gotten harder after years of cuts that have only accelerated under the Ford Conservatives and now that same government is attacking their rights and financial future. This has got to stop."

On June 5th, one day before taking a 5-month break from the Legislature, the Ford Conservatives introduced Bill 124, which will violate the Charter-Rights of almost one million Ontarians, causing wages in the public sector to further stagnate well below the rate of inflation. The Ford Conservatives claim the Bill is necessary to cut spending to deal with the deficit despite overwhelming proof that Ontario has a revenue problem, not a spending problem.

"Profitable corporations need to pay their fair share to help lower the deficit and fund public services. Raising taxes for profitable corporations and the wealthiest in our communities will help. Attacking the rights of frontline workers doesn't solve Ontario's money problems. And combined with cuts to the services we all need, all it does is put families and communities further behind. We know people are already resisting these changes and we're adding our efforts with this campaign to come together to stop this." Hahn said.

Communities, Not Cuts will be an aggressive, multi year campaign where CUPE members will work with other workers, those in a union or not, community activists, families, neighbours to fight Ford and defend vital public services and good jobs. The campaign will encompass a broad range of activities, from supporting direct actions in communities, to an extensive advertising and online/social media presence, door knocking and talking to Ontarians, town halls, and visiting local MPPs in every riding.



Communities, Not Cuts Backgrounder



- According to the government, Ontario has, “unsustainable levels of spending”¹ in programs over the last 15 years. And second, that wages that are “unsustainable”.
- Both claims are not supported by the governments own data.
 - Despite strong economic growth, real wages have decreased over the last decade according to Ministry of Labour data. (See charts below)
 - The deficit is not the result of a spending problem but instead the result of insufficient revenue. Ontario spends the least per person on program spending and generates the least per person on revenue. (See chart below)
- It is difficult to take the government’s analysis on this issue seriously. It is next to impossible to understand why the government has given away billions in revenue over the last eighteen months, if they sincerely believed the province is in a state of bankruptcy. According to the FAO, the “policy decisions by the current Ontario government will reduce revenues by \$2.1 billion in 2018-19, and by an average of \$3.7 billion over the next four years.”² A new government that “inherited a bankrupt province” would surely need as much revenue as possible to pay for the critical public services that Ontarians rely on.
- Taxes need to be increased on corporations and high-income earners. The race to the bottom regarding tax cuts has caused our deficit.
- Population, inflation and changing/aging demographics will increase the need for public services.
- Both right leaning and left leaning think tanks have expressed the need to invest in key areas.
 - In April of this year, the pro-business Ontario Chamber of Commerce has remarked on Ontario’s “relatively low per-capita expenditures on health care, education, and social protection” and encouraged “investments in areas such as transit and transportation, broadband internet, health care, skills and education, and trade promotion will help grow the economy and allow businesses to flourish, jobs to be created, and, ultimately, Ontario to be more competitive and prosperous.”³
 - The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives has similarly remarked that “it’s possible to maintain and enhance public services while decreasing the deficit and the debt-to-GDP ratio, so long as Ontario begins to address its longstanding revenue problem.”⁴

¹ <http://budget.ontario.ca/pdf/2019/2019-ontario-budget-en.pdf>

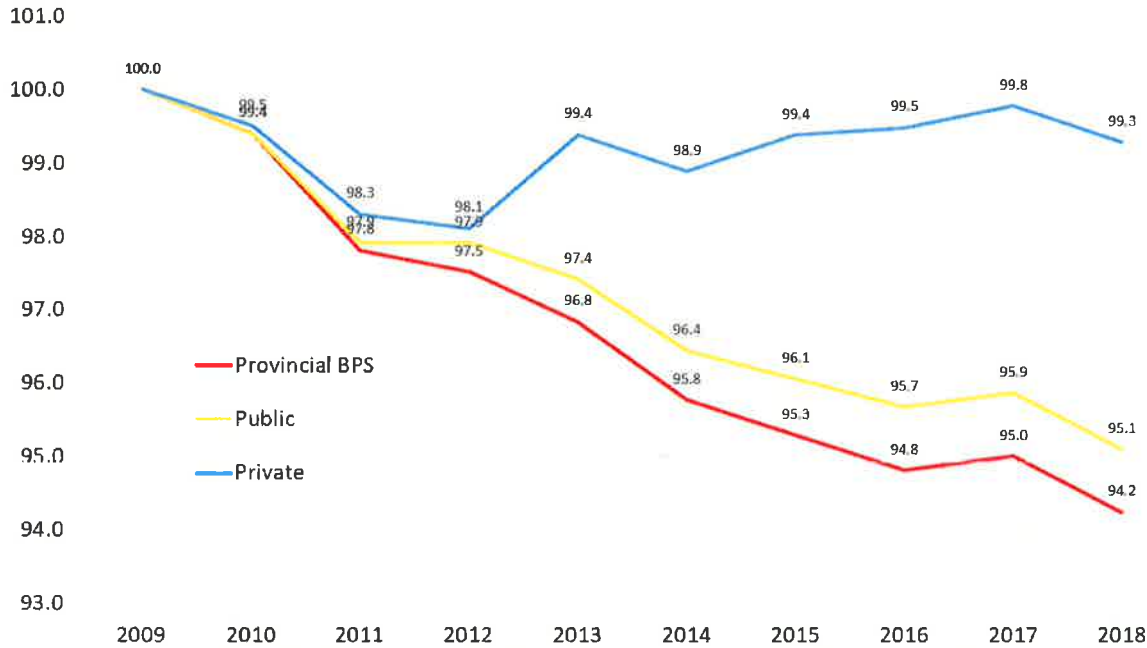
² <https://fao-on.org/en/Blog/Publications/EBO-fall-18>

³ <http://occ.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019-Debt-Report.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/Ontario%20Office/2019/04/Ontario%20has%20options.pdf>

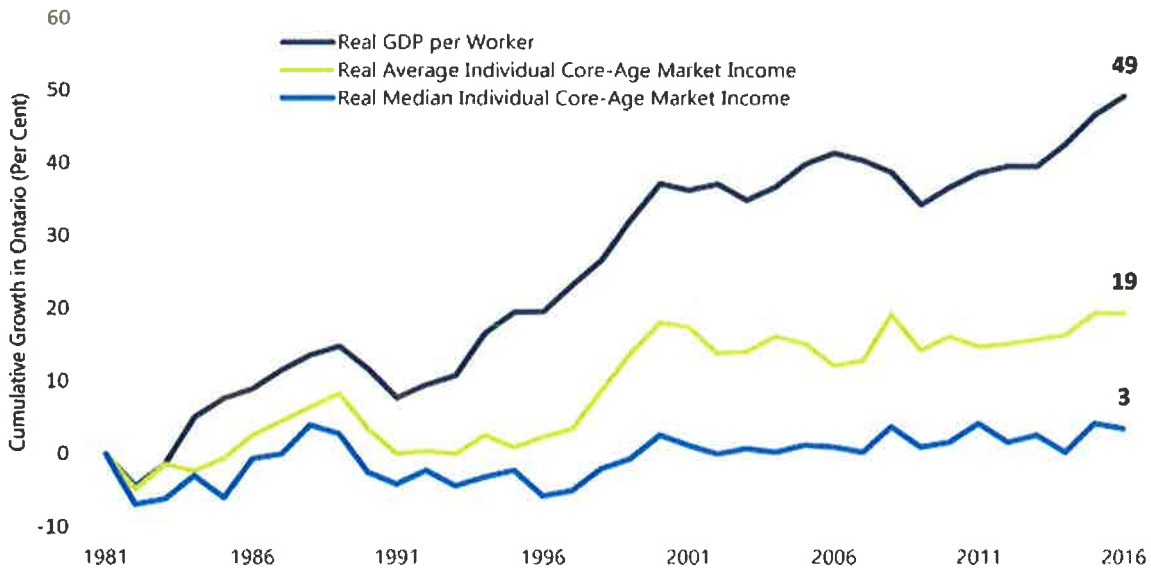
BPS, Public & Private Sector Wages Are Falling (2009-2018)

(adjusted for inflation 2009 = 100.0)



Source: Ontario Ministry of Labour Collective Bargaining Highlights Fourth Quarter 2018 Adjusted for inflation using Ontario CPI

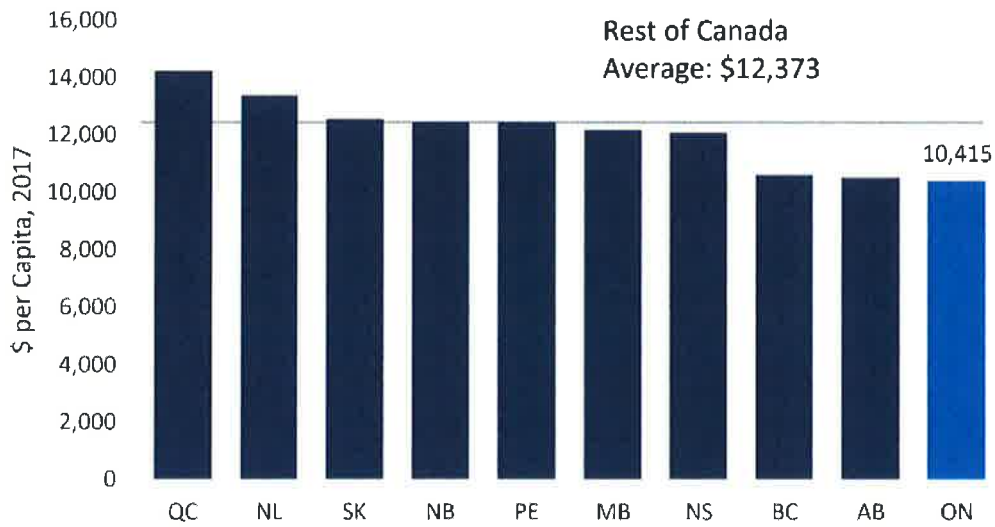
Economic growth did not raise the median income of working-age Ontarians



Note: Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per worker is calculated as real GDP divided by the labour force.

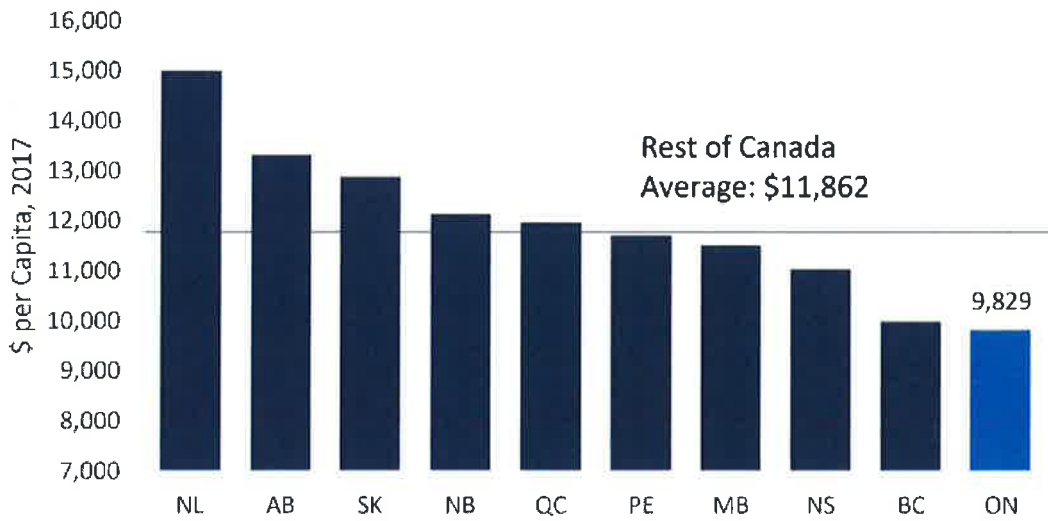
Source: Statistics Canada Labor Force Survey, Income and Expenditure Accounts, Canadian Income Survey and FAO.

Figure 1: Ontario total revenue per capita lowest in Canada



Source: Statistics Canada and FAO

Figure 5: Ontario program spending lowest among provinces



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Government Finance Statistics

BILL 124:



Bad for you, bad for our communities.

Before giving themselves a five-month vacation, the Ford Conservatives introduced Bill 124. The bill is bad for the front-line workers who deliver public services across the province and bad for every community in Ontario. Here's why— if passed, Bill 124 would:

- Take away your Charter-protected right to collectively bargain.
- Affect virtually any front-line worker funded all or partially through the Province of Ontario.
- Force you and other front-line public workers to accept contracts that don't keep pace with inflation.
- Give the Ford Conservative cabinet the power to tear up freely-negotiated contracts, force workers back to the bargaining table and interfere with interest arbitration.
- Take money you and your co-workers would have spent in your communities and hand it over to the Ford Conservative's rich friends through tax cuts.
- Set the stage for more attacks on working people in the public and private sectors. That's bad for you, bad for your co-workers, and bad for the communities we call home!

Facts

- 1 Free collective bargaining works**—almost all contracts are settled without a work stoppage, with work rules, compensation, and benefit costs agreed to by both parties.
- 2 Salaries didn't cause Ontario's financial problems, attacking wages of front-line workers won't solve them.** Ministry of Labour data shows public worker wages haven't kept up with inflation for the past 10 years. What's more, the proportion of resources spent to fund all public services that go directly to front-line worker compensation across Ontario has been falling.
- 3 Ontario has a revenue problem, not a spending problem.** Ontario spends far less per person than any other Canadian jurisdiction. Ontario collects far less in revenue than other jurisdictions. If the Ford Conservatives wanted to lower the deficit, they could start by raising the revenues they collect to the Canadian average. Billions of dollars would flow to support public services communities rely on, the front-line workers who deliver them, with billions left over for deficit-fighting.

Bill 124 isn't the law in Ontario—yet. It can be defeated! Here's how you can help defend public services and the workers who deliver them:



Send a message to the Ford Conservatives and your MPP telling them to oppose Bill 124.

Visit cupe.on.ca/bill124



Get involved in your Local's fightback—make sure they have your up-to-date contact information.



Talk about the danger of Bill 124 with your neighbours, family, and friends.

It's time to take a stand for



Send a message at communitiesnotcuts.ca

Ontario Social Services

The Ford Conservatives' Record

The Ford Conservatives are attacking vital services that build strong communities in Ontario. These cuts impact families, children and the most vulnerable people in our society, they attack our work and our members' jobs, all while the government provides tax breaks for Ford's rich friends. **Conservatives are transforming the province's social services to a for-profit or charity model instead of providing stable and reliable funding.**

Social services have been chronically underfunded for years. Workers in the sector face a gender pay gap, they face a care penalty and pay equity obligations have not been funded. It is becoming more difficult for people in Ontario to get the services they need. Instead of funding our social services to provide quality care and good jobs that will strengthen our community, **the Ford Conservatives are dismantling our social infrastructure through restructuring that will have an impact for generations of Ontarians to come.**

Take Action: tell the Ford Conservatives you support...

Social Services

in the Ford Conservatives' first year

- 1 Massive cuts to social assistance.
- 2 Expansion of for-profit childcare.
- 3 Layoffs at child welfare agencies.
- 4 Cuts to youth employment & community programs.
- 5 Defunding of safe injection sites.



Send a message to your MPP at www.communitiesnotcuts.ca



Ontario School Boards

The Ford Conservatives' Record

The Ford Conservatives are forcing cuts to our education system that will harm students, workers and the communities they live in. **Reduced services, larger class sizes, less safe schools and poorer quality education are certain**, unless we push back against the Ford Conservatives and their austerity agenda.

Quality education for students, decent working and learning conditions in our schools, and a responsive, accountable system are being put at risk by the Ford Conservatives, **while they hand over massive tax cuts to their wealthy supporters.**

It's time for the people of Ontario to take action! Tell the Ford Conservatives you support...



School Boards

 in the Ford Conservatives' first year

- 1 Funding cuts: reductions in per-pupil amounts directly impact the services that support students.**
- 2 Major job losses: layoff notices are piling up. The full scope of the damage won't be realized until school returns and the impact on services is felt.**
- 3 Bill 124, the Ford Conservatives' proposed 'wage restraint' legislation, would force workers to accept contracts that don't keep pace with inflation.**
- 4 The Ford Conservatives have opened the door to amalgamation of boards and/or school systems through the "Minister's Taskforce"**
- 5 An attack on women—most education workers are women. Many are precariously employed.**

Send a message to your MPP at www.communitiesnotcuts.ca



Ontario Municipalities

The Ford Conservatives' Record


The Ford Conservatives are attacking vital services that build strong Ontario communities. These cuts harm families, children, and the most vulnerable in every municipality across the province while they hand out tax breaks for their rich supporters.

The Ford Conservatives are forcing municipalities to make deep cuts to vital municipal services, while making the services we all rely on less accountable and accessible. Municipalities are being told to find a minimum of four per cent in cost savings across the board. Mayors from across Ontario warn the only way to do this is through massive service cuts and layoffs. **From libraries to paramedic services, public health to child care, no program is safe from the chopping block!**

Take Action: tell the Ford Conservatives you support...



Municipalities

 *in the Ford Conservatives' first year*

- 1 Massive cuts to public health funding.**
- 2 Elimination of supports for child care.**
- 3 Restructuring and reducing public health units.**
- 4 Cuts to provincial library support services.**
- 5 Chaotic restructuring of land ambulance services.**

Send a message to your MPP at
www.communitiesnotcuts.ca



Ontario Health Care

The Ford Conservatives' Record

The Ford Conservatives are attacking the vital health care services Ontarians depend on. These cuts harm families, children, and the most vulnerable across Ontario while the Ford Conservatives hand out tax breaks for their rich supporters.

The Ford Conservatives are making health care less accessible and accountable to Ontarians, **throwing the door wide open to privatization**, and putting less money per person into the system. **Ontario already spends less per person on health care than any jurisdiction in Canada.** Under the Ford Conservatives' plans, underfunding will only get worse!

Take Action: tell the Ford Conservatives you support...



Health Care

 in the Ford Conservatives' first year

- 1** Mega mergers of hospitals, long-term care homes & other community health providers.
- 2** Privatization of clinical support services.
- 3** Merging 14 Local Health Integration Networks, Cancer Care Ontario, & other agencies into a single "Super Agency."
- 4** Amalgamating 35 public health units into 10, while cutting public health funding.
- 5** Chaotic restructuring of land ambulance services.

Send a message to your MPP at
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Ontario Universities

The Ford Conservatives' Record

The Ford Conservatives have launched unprecedented attacks on Ontario's Universities.

Left unchallenged, the damage the Ford Conservatives have inflicted on our post-secondary education sector may never be undone!

Thanks to the Ford Conservatives, post-secondary education is less accessible, more expensive for most students, with less accountability and fewer supports. Students and their families can look forward to higher debt loads, less academic freedom and more racism on campuses, while the Ford Conservatives hand out tax breaks to their wealthy supporters.

Take Action: tell the Ford Conservatives you support...



Universities

 in the Ford Conservatives' first year

- 1 Real reductions in funding to university operating budgets and student assistance (OSAP)—more than a billion dollars province-wide!
- 2 Funding linked to labour market and commercialization activities, opening the door to more corporate interests, less public interest.
- 3 Defunding democracy and student services through 'student choice opt out' provisions.
- 4 Forcing universities to allow white supremacists & other extremists to speak on campuses through so-called 'free speech' codes.
- 5 Elimination of OSAP grants and elimination of loan repayment grace periods.

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