



Liberal Party of Canada | Parti libéral du Canada

81 rue Metcalfe Street, Suite 600
Ottawa (Ontario) K1P 6M8

July 10th, 2015

Kevin Grabowsky, National President
Union of Canadian Correctional Officers
1601 Avenue De Lorimier
Montréal, Quebec
H2K 4M5

Dear Mr. Grabowsky,

I am writing to you concerning the Liberal Party of Canada's position on several issues that are important to your membership. Stephen Harper and his Conservative government have rolled back many fundamental labour rights that affect workers' ability to organize freely, bargain collectively in good faith, and work in a safe environment. A Liberal government is committed to restoring fair and balanced labour laws that respect the integral role played by unions in our society.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

First responders put their safety and security on the line in service to Canadians, but the very nature of their jobs means they are more likely to be affected by PTSD. The federal government has a primary responsibility for the care of several groups – including correctional officers, veterans, and the RCMP – that suffer disproportionately from PTSD. Where we can, we should play a leadership role.

Unlike the current Prime Minister, who refuses to meet with Premiers on health care or any other topic, a Liberal government will create a national action plan on PTSD, bringing together the provinces and territories to develop a coordinated approach to support individuals suffering from PTSD. Furthermore, we have two federal bodies that can be mandated to focus on this issue: the Mental Health Commission of Canada and the Canadian Institute for Health Research.

The Liberal Party of Canada is committed to ensuring the highest quality mental health care services for first responders. We ask you to stand in harms' way to protect us and keep us safe; you deserve the highest level of support and care from your country, including mental health care when you need it, where you need it.



Liberal Party of Canada | Parti libéral du Canada

81 rue Metcalfe Street, Suite 600
Ottawa (Ontario) K1P 6M8

Occupational Health and Safety

It is incumbent upon any government that makes major labour law reforms – especially those that affect workers’ safety – to ensure that the process by which the amendments are made, and their substance, are fair, balanced, and evidence-based. Recent changes made by the Harper Conservatives to the *Canada Labour Code*’s definition of “danger” were made unilaterally – buried in an omnibus budget bill – and clearly failed to meet those standards. A Liberal government will repeal the changes to the “danger” provision, and revert to the previous definition, amended in 2000, which reflects extensive consultation with both employers and organized labour.

Sick Leave

The Liberal Party of Canada opposes the provisions in Bill C-59 that would create a new permanent sick leave regime, outside the collective bargaining process, through legislation. A Liberal government is committed to repealing the provisions of Bill C-59 related to sick leave in order to bargain in good faith with public sector unions.

Sick leave is a hard-fought benefit that has been negotiated at the bargaining table, including the special provisions UCCO has gained for its members. Liberals believe that government and public sector unions must look for ways to improve the sick leave and disability plan for their mutual benefit; however, if the parties to a public sector collective agreement want to alter their agreement, it should be done via consultation and negotiation at the bargaining table. This is the only way to ensure that a resulting sick leave system is fair to both employees and taxpayers.

Under Stephen Harper’s government, ideology has trumped evidence, and political expediency has replaced due process as it pertains to labour rights. There is perhaps no greater example of this than Private Member’s Bill C-377, recently rammed through by the Conservatives in the Senate. The Liberal Party of Canada believes C-377 is deeply ideological and highly partisan legislation which serves no demonstrable public good or necessary policy objective – its sole purpose: to diminish and weaken the labour movement in Canada. I want to reaffirm my commitment that a Liberal government will immediately repeal both Bill C-377 and Bill C-525.

Liberals remain strongly committed to supporting and protecting workers’ rights. In order for workers and employers, society and the economy-at-large to prosper, I firmly believe we need fair and balanced labour laws that respect due process and are developed through real consultation.



Liberal Party of Canada | Parti libéral du Canada

81 rue Metcalfe Street, Suite 600
Ottawa (Ontario) K1P 6M8

CPP/OAS

Canadians should be able to retire with dignity, but many are facing a retirement income crisis. If we do not find solutions to this problem now, Canadians will pay with higher costs later on. For many Canadians, CPP contributions are essential, long-term investments for a secure and dignified retirement. Over the past decade, Stephen Harper has weakened this commitment to basic retirement security for Canadian seniors.

The Harper Conservatives have eliminated previous investment tools like Income Trusts, destroying nearly \$25-billion in value formerly in the savings accounts of some two million Canadians. They have delayed eligibility for Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement by two years, which will take over \$30,000 from the lowest income and most vulnerable seniors.

The Canada Pension Plan is an investment in future retirement security. Liberals support an expanded CPP. This is about smart economic policy. Stephen Harper has failed to show any leadership, and he is not serious about helping Canadians save for their retirement. Promising a study on the eve of an election is not a plan, and does not add up to anything more than lip service.

Liberals are committed to working with all provinces and territories, workers, and employers to enhance the CPP for future generations. A Liberal government will also restore the starting age for Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement to 65.

Should you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact my office at Justin.Trudeau@parl.gc.ca, or Liberal Labour Critic, Rodger Cuzner at Rodger.Cuzner@parl.gc.ca.

Sincerely,

Justin P.J. Trudeau
Leader of The Liberal Party of Canada