



Canadian Piping Trades

UNITED ASSOCIATION

of Journeymen and Apprentices of the
Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the
United States and Canada

LOCAL UNION 488 – Edmonton

16214 – 118 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5V 1M6

Telephone (780) 452-7080 Fax (780) 452-1291



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A Message Concerning Bill 32

I recently attended a Building Trades conference where myself, as well as managers from the various other trades, discussed the impending Bill 32 and the possible affects it will have on our members. The UCP Government wants you to believe that Bill 32 will restore "balance" in the workplace and in doing so will build competitiveness for employers. This is untrue! This bill is modelled after the American Right to Work legislation and here are some things you should know about it.

1. The bill introduces new rules that will regulate union dues.

The legislation adopts "the U.S. "Janus" style obligation on unionized workers" to opt into the use of dues used in political or issue-based campaigns (Doorey, 2020). What this means to you, the members, is that individuals can now opt in where their dues are being donated. While this may sound like a good option for some, it will inevitably create a series of bureaucratic red tape and bog down Union administration staff that will ultimately eat up members dues. Second, the UCP Government is hoping that our members will opt in, thereby crippling Local 488's ability to advocate for your interests. Third, the legislation was written as "opt-in" rather than "opt-out" because the Supreme Court has already held up union political spending under "opt-out". (See Lavigne v. Ontario Public Service Employees Union)

<https://www.canlii.org/en/ca/scc/doc/1991/1991canlii68/1991canlii68.html?autocompleteStr=lavign&autocompletePos=1>).

2. Bill 32 restricts where and when peaceful picketing occurs.

Under this new provision, the Labour Board must grant approval prior to any secondary picketing. This provision also violates the freedom of expression and/or freedom of association rights enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights. In addition, Bill 32 prohibits picketers from impeding anyone attempting to cross a picket line.

3. Bill 32 eliminates timelines for certification votes.

When a group of employees prove the majority of employees are in favour of a Union to represent them (by virtue of a petition or through signing cards), the vote to certify that Union was as soon as possible within 5 days. Now an employer has up to 6 months to



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interfere through captive audiences, propaganda and other tools designed to squash organizing drives. This jeopardizes Union supporters through threats of terminations and other unfair labour practices. Workers that wish to become Unionized will have a more difficult time.

4. Bill 32 shortens the open period by allowing early negotiations of an agreement.

The only time Unionized workers can legally strike is during an open period and only after mandatory conciliation and a cool down period. With the open period shortened, this will effectively eliminate the most impactful tool organized workers have. Only company Unions, like CLAC, will benefit from this provision.

The above mentioned are just a few of the regressive provisions within Bill 32. Many other changes are addressed in the employment standards code and are lowering the rights for all workers in Alberta. The UCP wish to import an Americanized labour relations scheme to Alberta. This is just the start towards making us a right to work province. The government has defended this bill as "restoring balance" in Alberta's workplaces. However, the changes to the many labour relations legislations are not within the Canadian mainstream - not even close. These measures are blatantly Pro-Employer and Anti-Union. When passed it will impact hundreds of thousands of working Albertans including the 10,000+ of our members.

Fraternally Yours

Rod McKay
Business Manager/Financial Secretary