



PLEASE POST!

# 5 The President's -MINUTE UPDATE



Michelle Gawronsky

## At the Leg

### Slew of Bills, closures and Budget 2017 don't deliver for front-line as promised

The government announced a slew of changes in April and your MGEU leadership has been hashing out exactly what it all means for MGEU members — and then speaking out loud and clear on your behalf.

#### WAGE FREEZE UNLAWFUL, SERVICES UNDER THREAT

On April 5, I reminded **CBC** that public sector unions plan to fight Bill 28's wage-freeze legislation in court. The next day, I warned of the danger of privatizing our universal, public home care program.

On April 11, your MGEU Executive was at the Legislature for Budget Day to review the document, read between the lines, and respond as quickly as possible. MFL President, Kevin Rebeck, and I told the **Winnipeg Free Press** public service workers are already doing more with less and the 2017 budget does nothing to ensure Manitobans continue to receive the kind of public services they want and deserve.

I also spoke to the **Flin Flon Reminder** about how the budget puts public services at risk, especially in the North.

#### STRENGTH IN NUMBERS = MESSAGE DELIVERED!

Meanwhile, to protest the closures of three Winnipeg ERs, as well as health care cuts in general, we rallied in support of thousands of our fellow health care union members.



On April 26, we joined the **Manitoba Nurses' Union** to rally against dangerous cuts to health care in Manitoba.

We also continue to stand with the other health care unions against Bill 29, which would mean an expensive and disruptive restructuring of how we currently bargain collective agreements on behalf of thousands of health care members. With Health Care Support Services negotiations coming up this spring, we will continue to push hard for alternatives in the days ahead.

## Welcome to the May edition!

Here's what's been happening in and around our union in the last month.

If you have any questions, please get a hold of me through our Resource Centre (204-982-6438 or 1-866-982-6438) or e-mail me at [president@mgeu.ca](mailto:president@mgeu.ca).

## In Your Workplace

### FIGHTING TO KEEP BRANDON BLOOD CLINIC OPEN

This month, we continued our fight to keep Brandon's *Canadian Blood Services* facility up and running. I told the **Brandon Sun**, **Minnedosa Tribune** and **CKLQ** that our members fear blood donations in the region will go down significantly if the local collection clinic is replaced with occasional mobile units.

### MAKING THE CASE FOR SERVICES, JOBS AT MAIN STREET PROJECT, SARA RIEL INC., ACC

We've been meeting regularly with members at Main Street Project - Local 136, who support and shelter Winnipeggers living on the street, and Sara Riel - Local 353, who provide community mental health services, to minimize the impact of job losses at these agencies. Both were a result of management so-called "restructuring" and "realignments."

I recently told **CJOB** and the **Winnipeg Free Press** that these cuts are a direct hit at front-line services. We've also been working with members at Assiniboine Community College - Local 71 to address funding cuts to ESL classes when the demand is greater than ever.

### SOUNDING THE WARNING CALL RE: PUBLIC AIR AMBULANCES, WATER BOMBERS

On April 10, after we learned the government is contemplating privatizing its Air Services Branch, I met with our members and reminded reporters that we're talking about an essential, life-saving service here, and privatizing any public service would break one of Pallister's major election promises.

### RESOLVING EQUIPMENT, OVERTIME CONCERNS

I also recently met with a number of our Sheriff's Officers to help resolve ongoing challenges re: outdated equipment and involuntary overtime.

## At the Bargaining Table

### MEMBERS, WESTMAN RESIDENTS DESERVE BETTER

After over three years without a new contract, members of **Westman Lab - Local 351** in Brandon held an information picket to make one thing clear: the fact they earn over 7% less than others technologists and technicians in Manitoba is not only unfair — it's putting the diagnostic care of



the region at risk. Thanks to members who came out en masse with their signs and walking shoes, I was able to share that message with the CBC and the Brandon Sun.

#### RATIFICATION REVIEW

Members of **Riverwood Square - Local 380**, a Winnipeg supportive housing and assisted living facility, **Tamarack Recovery - Local 157**, an addictions recovery facility, and the **YWCA Thompson Residence - Local 424**, ratified new three-year agreements over the last few weeks, while members of the **University of Winnipeg Students' Association - Local 153** ratified a five-year agreement on April 12, 2017.

## In the Public Eye

### SPRING CAMPAIGN MESSAGE: LITTLE CUTS ADD UP

In the last few weeks, we've been producing our latest TV and online campaign — coming to a screen near you in May!

HINT: Watch for an "old school" game with a very current message: what seems like a



few cuts here and there can quickly and irretrievably add up to a public service system that does not meet the needs of Manitobans.

## The Big Picture

### SAFE WORKPLACES, SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

On Friday, April 21, we joined the **Public Service Alliance of Canada** for a lunch-hour rally at the Legislature, calling for greater safety in our workplaces and continued investment in the public services that keep our communities strong.

A week later, we marched with labour and

government reps, students and other workers and their families to the Leg to remember those killed or injured on the job this year.



The Day of Mourning Leaders' Walk reminds us of the importance of workplace safety and health policies.

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Contact us to get this 5-minute monthly update delivered to your inbox.

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