



Meeting Note Advice to Minister Melanie Mark

Date: March 27, 2019

Cliff #: 115362

Prepared for: Honourable Melanie Mark, Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training

Date, Time of Meeting and Location: April 2, 2019 - 11:15 - 11:45 AM - *Location TBD*

Attendees:

Mike Smith, President, Unifor Local 2200 (Coast Mountain Bus Company, Vancouver)
Joe Elworthy, Financial Secretary, Unifor National Skilled Trades Council
John Breslin, Director of Skilled Trades, Unifor

Issues:

s.13

Background:

- Unifor is Canada's largest private sector union, with more than 315,000 members across the country, working in every major sector of the Canadian economy.
- The union was founded in 2013 as a merger of the Canadian Auto Workers and Communications, Energy and Paperworkers unions.
- Unifor has a Skilled Trades department, which provides assistance and support to members, bargaining committees, and national representatives on skilled trades issues. This includes negotiating skilled trades language into collective agreements, apprenticeship language and assisting in securing apprenticeships.
- In BC, sectors of primary interest to the union might include transportation (road), services (hospitality and gaming), and resources (forestry) – see Attachment C.
- The union's priorities specific to the trades include increasing diversity and accessibility, challenging mental health stigmas in the workplace, new technologies in the skilled trades and increasing the participation of women in the skilled trades.
- In 2018, the union's BC Council was a vocal advocate for \$15 minimum wage, proportional representation, Indigenous reconciliation, greater equity in the workplace and affordable childcare. The BC Council's next annual meeting is November 21-24, 2019 in Whistler.
- As of November 2017, there were 28,300 Unifor members in BC, including 62 local unions and 249 bargaining units (see Attachment 3 for membership occupations):

- 42% (11,900) in the Transportation sector;
- 23% (6,500) in the Services sector;
- 18% (5,100) in the Resources sector;
- 9% (2,500) in the Communications sector;
- 8% (2,300) in the Manufacturing sector.
- BC companies where Unifor represents members include, but are not limited to:
 - Coastal Mountain Bus Company – TransLink subsidiary (4,700 members, including transit operators, mechanics, maintenance and SeaBus Workers);
 - Paper Excellence Canada pulp and paper mills in Crofton, Port Alberni and Powell River, and warehouse in Richmond (1,500 members);
 - Rio Tinto-Alcan in Kitimat (900 members);
 - BC Transit (650 members, including bus drivers, mechanics, and maintenance staff);
 - Fairmont Empress Hotel (500 members) and Hotel Grand Pacific (150 members) in Victoria; and,
 - Chances Casino in Kamloops (94 members).
- In April 2018, ADM Bindi Sawchuk met with Domtar of Kamloops and Unifor representatives. The meeting was an opportunity for Domtar and Unifor to provide an update on the BC Forestry Sector. Workers at the Kamloops mill are represented by Unifor.
- In April 2018, Premier Horgan met with representatives from Catalyst Paper Corporation, mayors and Unifor representatives to discuss U.S. duties of more than 28 per cent on Catalyst's exports of uncoated groundwood paper.
- In 2015, Unifor partnered with Domtar and Thompson Rivers University to enhance and enrich the quality of trades skills development in the Kamloops regional area.

s.13,s.16

s.13

Page 3

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13

s.13

Attachment A: Letter from Jerry Dias, National President of Unifor

Attachment B: Biography of Jerry Dias

Attachment C: Unifor Membership in British Columbia (as of November 2017)

Contact: Bindi Sawchuk, 778 698-8772

Attachment A: Letter from Jerry Dias, National President of Unifor

March 8, 2019

Dear Members of the B.C. Legislative Assembly,

Thank-you for taking the time to meet with rank-and-file workers from your community or sector of expertise.

Unifor is Canada's largest private sector union, representing over 315,000 workers in every major area of the economy. In British Columbia, Unifor unites close to 30,000 workers in most sectors, including transportation, natural resources, manufacturing, hospitality and gaming, and communications.

Healthy communities depend on good jobs, yet there is so much more that the B.C. government could be doing to protect good jobs and create lasting ones into the future. On April 2nd rank-and-file union members will be presenting tangible proposals for keeping our communities strong and building social and economic justice in every region of the province.

I encourage you to engage with these workers: ask questions, lend your support, or challenge ideas you might disagree with. Honest dialogue is healthy in our democracy, and indeed the only way forward.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jerry Dias".

**JERRY DIAS
NATIONAL PRESIDENT**

EH/ja:cope343

Attachment B: Biography of Jerry Dias, National President of Unifor



National president of Unifor, forefront of the fight for workers' rights, equality and social justice. Jerry has been active in the labour movement since he started his work life at de Havilland Aircraft (now Bombardier Aerospace) where he served as President of Local 112. He went on to join the union's national staff as aerospace sector coordinator and then became Assistant to the CAW National President. In 2013, he was elected as Unifor's first National President at the union's founding convention. Since then Unifor has grown to represent more than 315,000 workers in every sector of the Canadian economy.

An effective negotiator, Jerry has taken on corporate giants to secure good jobs for members and create the economic basis for increased living standards and shared prosperity.

Jerry assumed an active role in the USMCA as a consultant to the Canadian government and negotiating team where he consistently pushed to raise labour standards, maintain Canadian sovereignty and protect key domestic industries.

A committed trade unionist, he has been vocal on emerging labour issues including precarious work, youth unemployment and underemployment, growing income inequality and lack of work-life balance while strongly advocating for LGBTQ rights, gender equality and the elimination of violence against women. Under his leadership, Unifor's ground-breaking Woman's Advocate Program has expanded into more than 350 workplaces.

Jerry's mission is to strive to create progressive change for a better future.

Attachment C – Unifor Membership in British Columbia (as of November 2017)

