



For immediate release

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Manitoba's throne speech good for workers, mandatory minimum staffing ratios in health care a game changer – CUPE

WINNIPEG, TREATY 1 – Manitoba's largest labour union says the NDP government's blueprint for the year ahead is on the right track and offers important improvements for workers and seniors, including patient-to-staff ratios in long-term care. CUPE urges the province to invest in public services adjacent to Northern development and continue building a strong public sector that provides valuable services and good jobs for Manitobans.

"Two years into the NDP's term, and we are seeing continued improvements in the lives of workers and their families," says Gina McKay, President of CUPE Manitoba.

Health care in Manitoba has seen significant improvements over the past two years, including thousands of new workers hired, historic wage improvements for front-line support staff, and first-time-ever pension and benefit coverage for home care workers. CUPE has lobbied for over a decade for legislated minimum staff-to-patient ratios and is pleased to see this generational improvement in the lives of seniors.

"This government has really stepped up to the plate on health care," says Margaret Schroeder, President of CUPE 204. "Legislating patient-to-staff ratios will be a game changer in long term care, keeping seniors safe and comfortable."

"There is still more work to be done, but we know the government is responsive to front-line health care workers' needs, including adding more staff into the system."

"Stronger staff to patient ratios will ensure our seniors and patients get the care they deserve," added Schroeder. "This is a huge win for the health care system and will result in a major reduction in staffing shortages".

CUPE appreciates the government's commitment to eliminating sick note requirements for absences under seven days.

CUPE supports this government's plan to grow hydro to provide clean, public, affordable energy to Manitobans.

"We see this government's commitment to hydro, whether that's energy efficiency or expanded energy production as really important to growing Manitoba's economy," said Michelle Bergen, President of CUPE 998. "Highlighting Manitoba's plan to reach net zero is a really exciting part of this throne speech."

CUPE supports the governments continued commitment to expand access to child care in Manitoba.

"We still have a child care space deficit in Manitoba," says McKay. "Four hundred new spaces in schools will help ensure school divisions offer before and after school programs in all primary schools."

MANITOBA REGIONAL OFFICE

703 – 275 Broadway, Winnipeg, MB R3C 4M6

Phone: (204) 942-0343 • Fax: (204) 956-7071

CUPE supports this governments ongoing commitment to municipalities through the One Manitoba Fund.

“It’s good to see the Manitoba Government ready to work with the City of Winnipeg to get the job done on key infrastructure projects,” said Gord Delbridge, President of CUPE 500. “This will be an important partnership to keep the City of Winnipeg on the right track with affordability and public safety.”

CUPE urges the government to ensure appropriate supports for communities adjacent to all new Northern development projects, including social and community services, health care, and education.

“As the governments of Manitoba and Canada forge ahead with nation-building projects in the North, we need to make sure communities are able to support their growth in population,” says McKay. “In particular, we need to ensure robust health and social services are available to both the new workers and growing communities.”

The Canadian Union of Public Employees is Canada’s largest union representing more than 800,000 members. In Manitoba, CUPE represents approximately 40,000 members working in health care facilities, personal care homes, home care, school divisions, municipal services, social services, disability support services, child care centres, public utilities, libraries, and family emergency services.

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For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

David Jacks, CUPE Communications at 204-801-7339

Dale Edmunds, CUPE Communications / Media Contact 204-915-7429

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