

Unifor organizing policy

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Toronto, Canada



UNIFOR
the **Union** | le **syndicat**

Unifor Organizing Policy

1. Introduction: Why We Organize

Workers need unions to help equalize the inherent imbalance in bargaining power between workers and employers that exists in any workplace, and in society as a whole. As individuals, workers can never hope to improve compensation, working conditions, or social equity, confronting the concentrated economic and political power of employers. Only with union organization, representation and collective bargaining, will workers win the power to improve and protect their working conditions and living standards.

At the same time, organizing builds unions as credible, influential, and lasting organizations. But for the union, organizing is not just about getting more members. It is about solidifying and expanding our strength, power and influence – in workplaces, and in society. New members and increased membership and density increase our power and influence in our companies and sectors and in the broader political arena. They also help us to defend the historical gains that are embodied in our existing collective agreements: it simply won't be possible for already-unionized workers to hang onto their existing compensation and conditions, if the influence of unionization and collective bargaining continues to wane in the face of employer and government attacks.

Organizing builds unions as credible, influential, and lasting organizations.

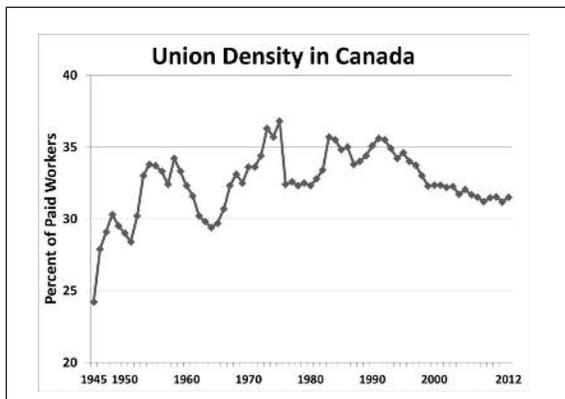
The gradual decline in union membership and density in Canada has eroded the labour movement's power, both economically and politically. Trade union membership has been falling slowly but steadily as a share of total employment in Canada since the late 1970s. In the private sector, unions face an especially daunting challenge: only one in six private-sector workers now enjoys the protection and benefits of a union contract. In the initial postwar decades, marked by strong economic expansion and rising living standards, employers were more likely to grudgingly accept unions and collective bargaining. Today, however, that attitude has changed. Emboldened by the power they enjoy under harsh right-wing policies (called "neoliberalism") and globalization, corporations are going for the jugular. The aggressive attacks on the very existence of unions and collective bargaining that have been launched by right-wing governments in several Canadian jurisdictions (including, of course, the Harper government) are a warning sign that the very future of unions is in jeopardy, unless unions successfully rise to the historic challenge we face.

All of this makes it harder for unions to win a decent share of the economic pie for our members. The redistribution of income away from labour is the flip side of the coin of the growing concentration of wealth in the hands of the very well off. Working-class Canadians, as a whole, have gained almost nothing in the last quarter-century (and many groups of workers are worse off): real wages have remained stagnant in Canada for the entire period of free trade agreements and other harsh, pro-

The Challenge of Union Density:

For over a quarter-century, labour law has moved steadily in a more anti-union direction, and employers (especially in the private sector) are more aggressive than ever in resisting union drives and busting existing unions.

The natural result has been a slow, continuing decline in unionization in Canada's economy. As shown in the figure, overall union density (that is, the percentage of paid workers who belong to a union) has declined from a high of 37 percent in the late 1970s (before neoliberal policies began rolling back workers' postwar gains) to slightly over 30 percent today.



That overall number doesn't tell the whole story, however. In the private sector, union density has fallen more dramatically: cut in half (from around 35 percent in the 1970s, to 17 percent today). Strong unionization in the public sector (around 70 percent and holding) has supported overall density. But how can strong unions and good benefits be sustained in the public sector, if unionization keeps eroding in the private sector? We already see governments and right-wing lobby groups using the false ideology of "shared misery": since so many workers in the private sector have lost decent wages, pensions, and other benefits, we'd better take them away from public sector workers, too. That's why supporting labour laws and union organizing in the private sector is a priority for the whole labour movement.

Union density differs widely across provinces, reflecting differences in economic structure, labour law, and worker attitudes (see table). Unions are

strongest in Quebec and Newfoundland & Labrador. Unions represent the smallest proportion of workers in Alberta and Ontario. Union density has shrunk most rapidly in B.C. and Alberta, under a succession of anti-union laws.

Labour law plays a crucial role by making it easier (or harder) to form a union, and giving new unions the ability to win a first contract and start making gradual progress for their members. Card-based certification rules (still in place in 6 jurisdictions) are important, since they limit the extent to which employers can intimidate and frighten workers. Jurisdictions which allow easy access to arbitration for first contracts (like Manitoba) also experience better success in organizing campaigns. Rules on unfair anti-union activity during union drives, and practices regarding how union votes are conducted, also make a big difference.

Union organizing was already declining even before the financial crisis and resulting recession. Since then, however, organizing activity has fallen even lower. This reflects deep fear and insecurity among many workers, plus the increasing aggression of employers and business-friendly governments in vilifying unions and resisting membership drives. This makes it all the more important for Unifor to set a new standard for determined, creative, effective organizing.

Union Density by Province		
	Union Density 2012	Change in Density 1997-2012
Que	39.9%	-1.5%
Nfld	38.9%	-1.8%
Man	36.0%	-1.8%
Sask	35.4%	-0.6%
PEI	34.2%	4.9%
BC	31.3%	-5.2%
NS	30.6%	0.3%
NB	29.8%	-0.2%
Ont	28.2%	-1.6%
Alta	23.5%	-2.5%
Canada Total	31.5%	-2.2%

Source: Unifor Research from Statistics Canada data.

business policies. Despite these attacks, unions still prove their worth to their members: union members enjoy better compensation, much greater security (including after retirement), and superior working conditions (such as health & safety protections) than workers without a union to stand up for them.

Indeed, the decline in union power affects all Canadians, not just union members. After all, stronger unions exert a broader positive influence over all aspects of society. Strong unions lift the overall level of wages, and help to equalize the distribution of income. Unions also exert political influence, which contributes to stronger social security programs and other progressive policies. Unions, in essence, are the voice of working people in broader social debates.

Therefore, increasing our membership and rebuilding union density through new member organizing will increase our power and influence throughout the economy and society: in particular workplaces, across industry sectors, in our communities, and in the political arena. Organizing is essential to our ability to protect and improve our collective agreements, to pressure employers (both union and non-union) to improve employment practices, working conditions and compensation, and to ensure that broader social and economic policies reflect the interests of working people, not just corporations and the wealthy.

Indeed, our commitment to organizing reflects our identity as a movement fighting for economic and social justice on behalf of all working people. Stronger unions are clearly associated with a stronger, more inclusive, more stable, and more equal economy in general. There is no society in modern history that has attained true mass prosperity – where the strong majority of working people are able to share in the economic gains of development, technology and productivity – without strong collective bargaining to ensure these gains are properly distributed. Only by organizing new members can we provide workers with the power they need to win a better quality of life, fairness, respect and democracy. Our effort to rebuild union strength in Canada is thus positioned directly as part of our vision for building a better, more equal and inclusive society.

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2. Building An Organizing Culture

Unifor will build a culture of organizing that is shared universally from top to bottom. Organizing must become a top priority, a core function of our existence, at all levels of the union. We must promote organizing throughout the union; it must become part of all of our conferences, meetings, and education programs. Every elected national and local leader, staff person, and union activist must understand that successful organizing is critical to our future.

To build this culture of organizing, we must promote the concept that “workers organize workers.” Indeed, there is no stronger way to build a culture of organizing in our union than to foster more direct member participation in organizing campaigns. Those campaigns will need the active support and engagement of our leadership, staff and activist base at all levels if they are to be successful. By

involving members directly in those campaigns, we will develop new activists committed to organizing and strengthen our union in many ways.

Who is a union organizer? In short, we **all** are organizers. Yes, we will continue to rely on the specialized knowledge and expertise of full-time staff in our organizing department. But the commitment to and participation in organizing must go much further than this. Our organizing campaigns will rely on passion and energy channelled through many distinct channels:

- Full-time organizing staff in the organizing department.
- Member Organizers (MOs): union members who are taken off their job and paid lost-time to participate in specific organizing campaigns.
- Local Union Organizers (LUOs): union members who work full-time on organizing within a particular local union, with their cost shared 50-50 with the national union.
- Local union leaders, stewards, and workplace representatives: Unifor includes thousands of full-time local leaders, who must also be involved regularly and actively in organizing campaigns.
- Activists: We must also tap into the energy and passion of rank-and-file union activists, who dedicate their spare time and passion to helping to build the union.

Unifor will undertake specific, concrete measures to build this organizing culture, consciousness and commitment throughout our new organization:

- **Oaths of Office** – The oath of office for all national and local leaders will include a commitment to organizing, as specified in our constitution.
- **Organizing Department** – The union will maintain a well-resourced national organizing department, supported by a modern infrastructure of databases, training, research, and communications.
- **Staff Responsibilities** – While the union has specialized organizing staff, all union staff, not just organizers, will be responsible for organizing.
- **Annual Organizing Conference** – An annual organizing conference will be held (under the auspices of the Canadian Council) to bring together national and local elected leaders, staff and activists.
- **Councils** – All Canadian, Quebec, regional and industry councils will establish standing committees on organizing to establish regional and sectoral priorities and strategies.
- **Local Unions** – Local unions will be encouraged to support and participate in organizing campaigns; every local union will have a liaison who maintains regular communication with the national organizing department; where appropriate, locals may even establish standing organizing committees.
- **Reporting** – Regular organizing reports will be made to every constitutional body (National Executive Board; Canadian, Quebec, regional and industry councils; and local executive meetings, etc.).
- **Education** – Every basic union training course (including new member orientation, basic union steward courses, etc.) will include an organizing component, with basic information on how to recruit members, and stressing how every unionist must be an organizer. Specialized courses on organizing will also be offered through the PEL program and in regional schools.

3. How We Organize: Our Organizing Model

a. Workers Organizing Workers

While skilled union organizers are critical to the success of every union organizing campaign, ultimately workers must organize themselves. After all, only they know best the specific issues and concerns (ranging from wages to pensions to health and safety to basic voice and respect in the workplace) that will motivate a majority of their peers to eventually support the union. Thus, there is a key role for large and representative inside organizing committees, actively and visibly leading the organizing campaign. These committees play the leading role, not only in signing up members but also, more importantly, in building a culture of collective action that will eventually underpin the power of the new union, and allow it to confront and resist their employer's inevitable anti-union activities. Our organizing campaigns are premised on developing and supporting these inside committees, implementing winning strategies that build strong majorities and strong unions in their workplaces.

Workers make the best organizers. And other workers are more likely to join the union when they can relate to and identify with the union's organizers. Workers talking to other workers enhances union organizing effectiveness, especially when they are from the same company, sector, community, gender or ethno-cultural heritage. Member Organizers (taken off the job to work full-time on specific organizing drives) will also increase our organizing capacity and develop our organizing culture. The new union will, therefore, develop and train a large and diverse pool of Member Organizers in all sectors and regions to assist in organizing.

Like these inside committees, it is important in our increasingly diverse society that our organizers and our materials reflect the workers we are helping to organize: by sector, language, ethnicity, gender, and age.

b. Strong Locals Organizing in Their Communities & Sectors

Successful organizing ultimately depends on the initiative, efforts, people, contacts and visibility of strong local unions. That's how unorganized workers first learn about the union. That's how they come to appreciate what we can do - for their income, for their security, for their community. Therefore, Unifor's organizing strategy must be rooted, first and foremost, in locally based efforts and capacities.

Our organizing success depends greatly on our reputation as a union that is committed to standing up for our members, mobilizing around their concerns, and negotiating collective agreements that are second to none. After all, it is our existing local activists and members who will first get to know neighbours, colleagues, and relatives in their communities who could also benefit from union representation; it is our local activists and members who best understand the specific issues and concerns that will motivate support for the union.

It is also crucial that we continue to mobilize our members to build a strong profile in our communities, providing a voice for workers and a progressive influence on public issues, policies and programs. Local unions can increase our visibility in our communities in many ways, including visiting schools and colleges to talk to students about unions and collective bargaining, mobilizing rapid response events to

draw attention to particular injustices experienced by particular workers (even non-union workers), and increasing our visible presence through signs, sponsorships, scholarships, charitable activity, and other community events.

The national union will encourage, support and assist local organizing leadership and initiative in many ways: through the resources and support of the national Organizing Department, strategic planning assistance, organizer training programs, and cost-sharing programs, including support for local organizing campaigns and a 50-50 cost sharing program to hire Local Union Organizers.

This is consistent with our overall emphasis in Unifor on supporting the emergence of strong, capable, highly visible local unions.

Where several smaller locals exist in a community, they will be encouraged to work together to increase the community visibility of the union and to coordinate their community-based organizing efforts, including (where feasible) through jointly sponsoring a cost-shared Local Union Organizer. This is consistent with our overall emphasis in Unifor on supporting the emergence of strong, capable, highly visible local unions, which become the face of the union in specific communities. Locals will also be encouraged to cooperate with other locals in their industry or sector to develop and implement organizing strategies and initiatives that increase density in that sector.

c. Strategic Organizing Priorities

While we are committed to providing union organizing opportunities to all Canadian workers, our approach to organizing must be deliberate and strategic, focusing our resources for best results, and maximizing the impact of organizing on our strength, power, and influence.

Our first priority will be to build density, strength and bargaining power in the major industries where our existing members work. In those key industries, our organizing will be supported by the work of the new Unifor industry councils. Wherever possible, we will use new organizing in those industries to

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strengthen and expand more broad-based and pattern bargaining. Our organizing efforts must keep up with structural and technical change in those sectors, unionizing new entrants, and preserving union density in the face of outsourcing and other corporate trends.

Priority should also be given to building density on a local or regional basis, especially in communities where our union is already prominent and influential, and where our locals are already high-profile symbols of the general fight for economic

and social justice. We will also expand our organizing efforts into new sectors and communities, especially where there is potential to build a critical mass of union membership and influence.

The national Organizing Department will work with industry and regional councils, and industry, regional and area directors, to develop and implement these sectoral and community organizing strategies and plans.

d. Organizing & Collective Bargaining

Organizing must be a central concern for our collective bargaining agenda in already-organized bargaining units. We can strengthen our hand at the bargaining table, by organizing non-unionized groups within or connected to already-unionized employers. In addition, we can limit employer interference in organizing by demanding neutrality agreements, using our existing membership and leverage to win neutrality from the employer and from key suppliers. Our employers cannot expect to have good working relationships with our union in one location, while they wage aggressive, fear-based, anti-union campaigns in another.

e. Organizing & Social Unionism

Our organizing also reflects our principles of social unionism. We emphasize in all our campaigns the importance of workers winning more influence over the general evolution of society, in order to better guarantee the well-being of our families and communities. After all, the things workers need for a better, secure life cannot all be won at the bargaining table: they also require progressive change in our economic, social, and environmental policies. For example, there is great potential for the new union to build its profile and credibility in our communities, by mobilizing our local activists to defend specific groups of workers – even non-union workers – who have been badly exploited by employers or government. This type of local “rapid response capacity” will position our union (rooted so well in our communities) as a force fighting for broader fairness for all workers, and also spark more interest in union organizing campaigns.

f. Evaluation & Innovation

Our commitment to effective and successful organizing campaigns requires that we use a broad range of proven union-building strategies, methods and tactics, including strategic research, inside organizing committees and member organizers, a strong emphasis on personal communications, supplemented by modern communications technology, and other tools. At the same time, we must continuously monitor our effectiveness, adjust or change methods or campaigns that are not effective, and constantly incorporate and test new ideas. Regular organizing reports at all union bodies will help to reinforce this culture of ongoing evaluation and innovation.

New organizing ideas, methods and tactics can be generated by specialized research as well as from the experiences of everyone involved in organizing within the union. The new union’s annual organizing conference will be an important forum for disseminating and discussing these new ideas and best practices. The national organizing department, working with the education department, will gather information on successful organizing innovations, and train our organizers at all levels to benefit from that knowledge.

4. How We Organize: Internal Management & Oversight

a. An Enhanced Financial Commitment

Unifor’s constitution allocates 10% of national dues revenues to organizing. This will endow our organizing efforts with at least \$10 million per year in financial support, immediately qualifying our

new union as undertaking the most ambitious and well-resourced organizing strategy in the history of the Canadian labour movement. This commitment reflects the extraordinary emphasis we are placing on organizing in the new union, and the essential role it must play if we are to reverse the erosion of union power.

Some of the funds will be spent directly by the national union to fund the national Organizing Department and its specialized organizing staff, and associated support and infrastructure services (such as a national organizing database). Some resources will be allocated to fund participation by Member Organizers (MOs), and related training, strategic research, and communications.

In addition, to encourage and assist local unions to prioritize organizing and enhance their local organizing capacity, the national organizing fund will also support local initiatives. A crucial avenue for this support will be through cost-sharing programs, including support for local organizing campaigns, and the cost-shared (50/50) Local Union Organizer (LUO) program with local unions or groups of local unions (cooperating within a particular community or sector).

To encourage and assist local unions to prioritize organizing and enhance their local organizing capacity, the national organizing fund will also support local initiatives.

The Organizing Fund will be administered by the national officers of the union, who will report regularly to the National Executive Board (in conjunction with the Organizing Director) on the allocation of organizing funds, and the progress of our organizing plan.

b. National Organizing Department

The union's organizing program and activities will be developed and implemented by a national Organizing Department. This department will have a unique presence in Quebec, reflecting the national nature of the union in Quebec, and reporting to the Quebec Director.

The Organizing Department will work closely with other national departments (including research, communications, legal, and education). This emphasis on cross-department cooperation and integration reflects our recognition that organizing must be a top priority of the whole union. If we are to win some of the challenging organizing drives that are ahead of us, we must be deliberative and strategic in assembling resources, developing plans, and implementing them with the support of every resource the union can bring to bear.

The Organizing Department will be adequately staffed with organizing specialists (while remembering that every staff member of the union must also be an organizer). Their efforts are supplemented by Member Organizers as needed, and led by the Organizing Director. The Organizing Director will oversee the development of organizing targets and annual plans. The Organizing Director reports to the national officers of the union, and will participate in the new union's Strategic Planning Committee (which will integrate the union's efforts to develop and execute powerful multi-faceted initiatives in organizing, bargaining, and political action). The Director will work closely with an Assistant who is

assigned responsibility for the Strategic Planning Committee and organizing. The Director (or designate) will also report regularly to the National Executive Board and to the Canadian, Quebec, regional and industry councils.

c. Specialized Resources & Supports

The union will also develop and maintain specialized resources and supports for organizing. One crucial resource will be a national organizing database. This national database will be established to support strategic organizing and campaigns. It will compile and analyze data on prospective workplaces, key contacts, company profiles, community and retired members, organizing volunteers (by language, sector, community), and other relevant information. Building and maintaining this database (with due attention to timeliness, privacy, and accessibility) will be an important organizing priority in the new union.

Another key feature of the new union's organizing work will be to develop a stronger strategic and corporate campaigns capacity. We need the ability to research, plan and implement comprehensive, strategic and corporate campaigns to counter employer interference in organizing. These campaigns will rely on careful research about companies' vulnerabilities, membership mobilization, community coalition building, publicity and public pressure, political and regulatory pressure, and economic and legal pressure. Our research, communications, and legal departments will play vitally important roles in this work. So will our education department, which will need to develop the capacity for specialized education and training in organizing best practices to ensure that these strategic campaigns are as effective as possible.

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d. Designing & Launching Major & Strategic Campaigns

Smaller, more "routine" organizing campaigns can be undertaken and supervised at the discretion of the Organizing Director, following appropriate analysis and consultation with local organizers and local union leadership.

Larger strategic organizing campaigns, however, are a matter of importance to the whole union. Such campaigns are an integral part of the union's strategic plans to build density and power. They usually involve targeting a large, globally connected corporation with multi-site operations and extremely mobile capital structures that make it more difficult to organize and negotiate collective agreements. These campaigns require the capacity for large, coordinated multi-site organizing, and need the commitment and participation of the union at all levels - national, sectoral, regional and local.

Strategic organizing campaigns, and ancillary corporate campaigns, need to be conceived, launched and implemented systematically and strategically. These campaigns will be developed through the national Strategic Planning Committee (on behalf of the national officers of the union), working closely with the Organizing Director and the directors of other relevant departments (including research, legal, and communications). Appropriate industry councils and local unions must also be engaged in these strategic campaigns.

e. Organizing Targets, Plans & Accountability

The union's annual organizing objectives and strategic priorities and targets will be established by the national officers, working with the Organizing Director, Regional, area, and industry Directors, and the Canadian, Quebec, regional and industry councils. The plan and targets will be updated or revised as required. Regular reports on organizing objectives, priorities and targets will be made to the NEB, Canadian, Quebec, regional and industry Councils.

f. Allocation of Newly Organized Units

Newly organized units are allocated to locals by the national officers (including the Quebec Director in the case of new units in Quebec), in consultation with organizers and local union leadership. The transition from organizing to collective bargaining must be as immediate and effective as possible, providing for continuity of service and the integration of efforts to support the new unit by the organizers, the national representative, and the local union.

g. Training our Organizers

Our organizing campaigns will need the active support and participation of our leadership, staff and activist base at all levels if they are to be successful. This will require an ambitious and innovative training program to increase understanding and support for organizing, and enhance the capacity of our staff, local leaders, and activists to participate in effective organizing campaigns. The training of organizers must therefore be a key part of all union education, including Paid Education Leave (PEL), regional schools, and dedicated training modules for organizers.

We aim to develop a cadre of Member Organizers (MOs) in all sectors and regions to assist in organizing campaigns and ancillary corporate campaigns. A comprehensive, multi-level organizing training program will provide specialized training for Member Organizers and Local Union Organizers. In recruiting and training Member Organizers, we recognise the need for diversity, and strive to use our diverse members to recruit young workers, precarious workers, women and members of equity seeking groups.

Staff representatives in the union – both specialists in the Organizing Department and servicing staff – will also benefit from ongoing training in new practices and strategies.

In addition, every basic union training course (including new member orientation, basic union steward courses, etc.) will include an organizing component, with basic information on how to recruit members and identify organizing opportunities – stressing that every unionist must be an organizer.

An annual organizing conference will be held to bring together national and local elected leaders, staff and activists; it will include an organizing training dimension.

5. Mergers

Our new union is being formed with the explicit goal of renewing and re-energizing the Canadian labour movement. We are honest in recognizing the challenges that face Canadian unions, and ambitious and creative in our determination to overcome those challenges and build a modern, effective force fighting on behalf of all working people. We believe the formation of our new union will also help to re-energize and inspire others in the Canadian labour movement to do likewise.

Indeed, we welcome other unions to join our union. By joining in the formation of a new and innovative organization, other unions are welcome to add their ideas, energy, and experience to the effort to defend and extend union membership and collective bargaining. Groups which could consider merging with the new union include larger national unions, as well as smaller independent labour groups and associations. They may consolidate our density in existing sectors, or add new sectors to the rich sectoral and regional mix that will be embodied within the new union. Unifor's structure and constitution, which recognizes and supports the sectoral diversity of the organization through the operation of industry councils, the structure of our National Executive Board, and other features, lends itself readily to mergers with unions representing new sectors; they will be fully represented within the constellation of our new union. Future mergers will strengthen our new union and the new members who are joining it, and contribute to the broader revitalization of our whole labour movement.

Unifor will work to extend opportunities for membership to workers in non-traditional settings.

Unifor will be proactive and strategic in pursuing mergers with other unions. One initial task in this regard will be to develop a catalogue of the hundreds of smaller associations and independent unions, which would benefit greatly from belonging to a stronger, more capable body. At the same time, of course, the national officers of the union will initiate discussions with larger organizations, which may also be inspired to join our shared effort to build a dynamic, innovative new union.

6. Members In Community Chapters

As part of our mission to build a powerful movement fighting for the interests of all working people, Unifor will work to extend opportunities for membership to workers in non-traditional settings. These include unemployed workers; union members who joined during a not-yet-successful organizing drive; and workers in precarious, temporary, contract, self-employed and freelance situations.

These workers are invited to join the new union by forming Community Chapters, which in most cases would be affiliated to an existing local union active in their particular community. The rationale, goals, structures, dues, and services of these new Community Chapters are fully described in our companion policy paper on this subject (*Broadening Union Citizenship*).

In addition to providing a broader range of opportunities for working people to identify with, join, and participate in our union, these Community Chapters will also be vital in supporting our ongoing efforts to organize bargaining units in more workplaces. After all, these certified or recognized bargaining units (where workers enjoy the full benefits of union membership, protected by a collective agreement) will remain the core strength of our union.

There is one specific way in which the formation of Community Chapters will relate directly to the other organizing campaigns of the union. When a traditional organizing drive is not successful, union supporters may be encouraged to form a Community Chapter to lay the foundation for subsequent organizing drives, and to build a culture of collective action and union solidarity within that workplace.

Building the Community Chapter would also help to train union leaders in the workplace, and provide members with more experience and education which would enhance their power when they eventually succeed in forming a bargaining unit.

7. The Broader Context: Fighting For Fair Labour Laws

Union organizing is tough at the best of times. Although a majority of Canadian workers know they would benefit from union membership, and the right to organize is supposedly protected by the Canadian constitution, Charter of Rights, and international law, many Canadians are unable to gain union representation and a collective agreement even if they want it. The reason is simple: anti-union employers take advantage of weak labour laws to mount fear-based anti-union campaigns, including illegal firings and plant closures. This climate of fear and intimidation has been exacerbated in recent years by increased corporate concentration and capital mobility.

Indeed, the anti-union bias of Canadian labour laws has been a key factor behind the decline of union density in the past three decades. This is evidenced by the fact that union representation is significantly stronger in provinces (such as Quebec, Newfoundland, and Manitoba) where labour laws remain more supportive of union certification and collective bargaining.

Labour legislation must be improved to respect and support the right to organize a union and bargain collectively for a better deal.

Labour legislation must be improved to better respect and support the right to organize a union and bargain collectively for a better deal. It must provide a simple and fair certification process and restrict employer interference in workers' rights, including:

- Better protection for union organizers and workers seeking to exercise their right to organize.
- Improved certification opportunities, including the use of membership cards for certification.
- Faster, fairer certification votes.
- Automatic certification for employer unfair labour practices.
- Expanded use of first-contract arbitration for newly certified unions.
- Stronger successor rights.
- Sector-wide collective bargaining and certification.
- Union security and Rand formula.

At the same time as we fight for progressive changes in labour laws, we must also campaign vigorously to defend those progressive features which remain in effect (such as anti-scab laws in Quebec and B.C.), and to push back even more aggressive anti-union laws now being promoted by corporations and their favoured political parties (such as proposals to prohibit the Rand formula which have been advanced recently in several jurisdictions). The union is committed to public education and political action on these issues as a priority component of our overall political activity.

8. Conclusion: Fighting for Our Future

Unifor's goal is to organize and mobilize Canadian workers in defence of their rights and a better country - no matter where they live, in what industry they work, or what precise form their relationship with the employer takes. Through the process of forming our new union, we have raised the hopes and expectations of our members and other Canadian workers that we can do it differently, and we can do it better. This includes our organizing. We are committing very substantial financial resources to organizing, and affirmed that organizing must be a core priority of the new union at all levels - from Unifor's officers right down to rank-and-file members. We have also agreed to implement an innovative strategy to open opportunities for union membership (through our Community Chapters) to workers who do not belong to a certified or recognized bargaining unit.

Our success in organizing will be an important indicator of whether Unifor is living up to the hopes and expectations we have raised. We collectively and passionately commit to implementing this ambitious organizing strategy, and turning around the decline in union power that is so threatening the economic, social, and political well-being of everyone in Canada who must work for a living.