

Here they go again!



Negotiating OUR way into trouble

Stephen Harper wants to negotiate away more and more of what makes us Canadian.

Will we let him?

HOW WE SHARE our wealth is what makes Canada work.

We do it in ways that allow us to keep the promise we made to ourselves to create a nation where equality always has to come first. Whether you live in a region that is booming, or a province that is struggling, the promise of Canada is that you will receive equal access to health care and social and public services.

It's simple: We are all in this together.

Two agreements

The Canada Health Transfer (CHT) and the Canada Social Transfer (CST) are two of the formal ways we strive to reach equality.

The CHT and CST are transfers of federal funds to the provinces to support health care, post-secondary education, social assistance and social services, and early childhood development and education.

In 2010-11 the CHT is more than \$25.4 billion; the CST is \$11 billion.

These federal transfer programs help us keep that promise to ourselves—equality regardless of where you live.

It is also about solidarity—caring for our neighbours across this great country. It is about wanting the best for all Canadians.

For workers in these sectors, the transfer payments are a significant amount of money used to improve working conditions and help the families and communities they serve.

A broken promise

In 2014 the federal Health Accord regarding the funding of the Canada Health Transfer (CHT) and, by extension, the Canada Social Transfer (CST), is up for renegotiation.

Unfortunately, many of our politicians and business leaders don't

want to uphold the promise. They want to cut these transfers, cut those services—cut out the very heart of our nation. We are told there is no choice. But they turn around and favour corporations and the super rich with tax cut after tax cut. They tell us we have to accept cuts to services—so corporate executives can pay less tax.

They tell us that workers must take wage freezes—or pay cuts—so the top 5% of income earners can receive larger bonuses.

And forget about those programs that Canadians want—early childhood education, home care or pharmacare.

But these are all choices—decisions that should be made by governments in a democratic manner, not policies dictated from corporate boardrooms or their “think tanks”.

Worst of all—it doesn't work.

We have had decades of tax cuts, tax breaks, deregulation, privatization...and it brought our economy and our nation to the brink.

Cuts to these transfers mean longer waiting times, larger caseloads in social services, higher tuition fees and poorer public services overall.

For workers, cuts in transfers mean layoffs and working longer and harder to keep up with the needs of the public they serve.

Make them live

up to the promise

The 2004 Health Accord was created to repair the damage to our public health care system due to cuts made in the 1990s.

The Health Accord promised 10 years of increased funding, with a built-in “escalator clause” of a 6% increase each year to target specific problems. And, for the most part, it helped.

As these transfer programs come up for renegotiations, the Harper government is signaling it wants to cut these transfers, while giving their corporate and rich friends more tax cuts.

We need to work together to force them to put people before tax cuts and excessive corporate profits.

We need to invest more money to keep that most prized jewel of Canadians—Medicare—strong.



THREE PRIORITIES

- **FIRST**, we need them to commit to continuing the funding—at current levels with an escalator clause.
- **SECOND**, we need them to put restrictions on where that money can go! Money for health care and public services should go to health care, social services and education.
- **THIRD**, we need to ensure the viability of continuing the funding of health care and public services for the future. The federal government must stop the tax cut giveaway to the rich. End corporate tax cuts and increase taxes on the top 1% of earners.

To make sure this happens, we have to watch them. Scrutinize their efforts!

We also have to tell them what we want! Often—Loudly!

JOIN US

Join us to help make sure they keep the promise!

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■ 15 AURIGA DRIVE
NEPEAN, ONTARIO
CANADA / K2E 1B7

■ [613] 228-9800
FAX [613] 228-9801

■ www.nupge.ca

■ national@nupge.ca

The National Union of Public and General Employees is an affiliate of the Canadian Labour Congress and a member of the Public Services International.

