

ATLANTIC REGIONAL OFFICE

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MEMORANDUM

(via email)

To: CUPE Local Presidents and Recording Secretaries, Atlantic Regional Office Staff

Copy: Alan Linkletter, CUPE NS President; Sherry Hillier, CUPE NL President

Date: October 19, 2026

Re: Bill 148

Dear members,

On August 22, 2017 then-Premier Stephen McNeil brought Bill 148 – *Public Services Sustainability (2015) Act* into effect. The Bill imposed a non-negotiated wage settlement that restricted collective bargaining and unilaterally removed longstanding articles from our collective agreements. CUPE and the other unions representing the workers whose rights were violated through this Bill challenged the legislation in court, and on February 25, 2026, Justice Ann E. Smith of the Nova Scotia Supreme court issued a decision declaring Bill 148 to be unconstitutional.

Today, the parties presented a draft order to Justice Smith, requiring the Province to pay damages to union members who were employed during the four years that Bill 148 restrained collective bargaining in recognition of the violation of their rights. The Justice directed the parties to make some non-material changes to the Order, and it is expected that the final order could be issued as soon as the end of this week.

The draft order provides for damages of up to \$5,000 to be paid to affected members depending on certain criteria, such as their date of hire and collective agreement language regarding long service awards:

- \$1,250 if the member worked during the first year of wage restraint.
- \$1,250 if the member worked during the second year of wage restraint.
- \$750 if the member worked during the third year of wage restraint.
- \$500 if the member worked during the fourth year of wage restraint.
- \$1,250 for each member who was eligible for a Service Award and would have accrued additional service towards the Service Award but for Bill 148.

MARK HANCOCK

National President/Président national

CANDACE RENNICK

National Secretary-Treasurer/Secrétaire-trésorière nationale

DAWN BELLEROSE, PATRICK GLOUTNEY, SHERRY HILLIER, GINA MCKAY, KAREN RANALLETTA

General Vice-Presidents/Vice-présidences générales

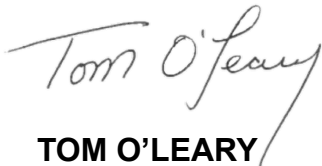
The exact years the wage restraint was in place vary by bargaining unit. The years can be identified by the four years in which the wage increases were set at 0%, 0%, 1%, and 1.5% with 0.5% on the last day of the fourth year.

The draft order does not reactivate service award accrual.

As part of discussions with the Province, we were able to get the Province to promise that it will not try to get the decision overturned. Justice Smith's decision will stand as a precedent for future governments who would consider using legislation to restrain collective bargaining rights.

The final order will include a deadline for payments to be made to all affected individuals. We will keep members updated as soon as more details are available.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom O'Leary".

TOM O'LEARY

Atlantic Regional Director

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