



PRESS RELEASE from the
Nova Scotia
Federation of Labour, CLC

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Federation urges NS government to honour wage parity

Halifax, N.S. – With potential strikes looming for rural hospitals and schools, Nova Scotia Federation of Labour President Rick Clarke says the principle of wage parity - a system of equal pay and benefits that has been in place for the last 10 years in our health care and education system - is not something that can or should simply be set aside now because our province, along with most other governments, are facing a deficit.

4,100 hospital workers and more than 3,000 school board workers, members of The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) have announced a strike deadline of Monday, January 18, 2010. Negotiations between 2500 members of CAW (Canadian Autoworkers) hospital employees and Cape Breton District Health Authority, Guysborough Antigonish Strait Richmond Heath Authority and IWK have broken off and the union will enter conciliations the third week of January.

“We too would urge the parties to get back to the table and deal with all of the issues, including wage parity, but for this process to work both parties must be at the table with a goal and mandate to find the resolve,” said Clarke.

“Continuing to pay workers less outside HRM, including rural areas, in Nova Scotia will have a devastating effect on rural services and economies,” Clarke added.

“Certain classifications are facing shortages of workers. By paying workers less outside Halifax would make the shortages even more severe. Many workers are working in departments that are not fully staffed. Where will this leave the recruitment and retention programs that the employers have in place?

“Failing to honour the long recognized practice of wage parity is not only failing to provide fairness and equity for these workers; it is also going to have a double negative impact on our rural communities; initially they will literally be losing much needed spending in their economies and in the longer term they face greater potential of understaffing in these areas.

“Healthcare and education workers are an extremely important part of our community and our economy. It is time the employer treat all of these workers fairly - every healthcare and education worker in this province deserves equal pay for equal work,” Clarke said in conclusion.

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For more information, please call Rick Clarke at: 454.6735 (office) or 434.5612 (home)

CAW Local 4005