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Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, CLC

PRESS RELEASE from the N.S. Federation of Labour

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dartmouth Holiday Inn — Labour activists vowed to lobby the NDP government for first contract legislation and universal access to workers' compensation at the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour Convention in Dartmouth this week.

While there was much celebrating of the \$25-billion shipbuilding contract, it did not detract from the serious business of debating more than 40 important resolutions on everything from mental health and workplace bullying to protecting health care and other public services.

Delegates condemned the proposed 10% cut to the Civil Service, and the 3% cut to district health authorities. They opposed P3s and the contracting out of public services, saying it is time to work towards contracting work back in.

They called for recognition for the role that public sector unions play in the economy, and agreed that it was important for public and private sector unions to work together, by forming coalitions on key issues.

They praised the Ships Start Here campaign for taking the message of pride in our industry across the country, expressed optimism at the opportunities the Irving contract presents for workers, and stressed the importance of a strategy for jobs in our rural communities.

They renewed their commitment to protecting and strengthening Medicare, and to the Citizens' Health Care Network. They opposed the proliferation of private health services, like McKesson Canada, the largest for-profit supplier of health services in the world. They called for increased funding for mental health, and endorsed the recommendations of the Hyde Inquiry.

They agreed to campaign for a national home care program, and for a Pharmacare program that would include all Canadians.

They renewed support for the Federation's retirement security campaign, aimed at protecting and strengthening public and private pension plans.

They vowed to lobby for increased funding for special needs students, so that students and teachers get the support they need. They called for regulations to deal with workplace bullying, and higher standards for occupational health and safety.

On the international front, delegates called for transparency in the Canada-Europe Trade Negotiations (CETA) and vowed to oppose all threats this agreement may pose to municipal or provincial powers and to public services. They vowed to step up the fight for fair taxation, and endorsed a 0.05% Robin Hood tax on financial transactions, to be used to fight poverty and climate change, and to protect public services.

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Union representatives from public and private sector unions promised to work together to achieve common goals, and said they would consider building a workers' action centre—a space for meetings, education, training and rallies, to help build a culture of solidarity that unites and inspires.

The four-day convention wrapped up today with the election of executive council. Rick Clarke was returned unopposed for his twelfth term as president of the 70,000-member Federation. NSGEU President Joan Jessome was re-elected First Vice-President, and Kyle Buott, of the NS Citizens' Health Care Network, was elected as Secretary-Treasurer. Delegates also elected three Vice-Presidents-at-Large: Colleen Hodder, Karl Risser and Danny Cavanagh; and a Vice-President Representative of Workers of Colour and Aboriginal Peoples: Jason MacLean.

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CAW Local 4005