



# NEWSLETTER

Nov / Dec 2014

United Nurses of Alberta



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## UNA Local 115 Event

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United Nurses of Alberta Local 115 members enjoyed an evening of team building at Speeders.ca indoor go karts with UNA 1st Vice-President Jane Sustrik.

**Nurses' unions propose 11  
key recommendations to  
fight Ebola in Canada**

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# Message from the President

By Kevin Champagne  
Local 115 President, United Nurses of Alberta

**A**lbertans can take this moment to let out a well-deserved sigh of relief. It has been a long struggle, requiring solidarity to stand up to the government to successfully put an end to proposed legislative changes that would see the promise of pension plans broken.

In a media release sent on Sept. 18, the Alberta Government announced that Bills 9 and 10, which would have negatively impacted the public sector pension plans, will die on the order paper, as a new session of the legislature begins this fall. Premier Jim Prentice announced that his government had no plans to bring these pension bills back during the upcoming sitting of the Legislature, due to begin in Nov. 2014.

Many voices in the labour movement described these bills as an attack on front-line workers. MLAs who were seen as not acting in the best interest of those who elected them were deluged by phone calls, emails, and meetings with concerned constituents. And questions were raised about the accuracy of the information with which the government based its proposed changes on.

Through the hard work of affected workers and their families, MLAs felt the pressure and convinced the government to back down on the unnecessary and dangerous pension changes. But while they backed down this time, there is no assurance they will not try again in the future.

We have many burning issues that still need to be addressed in the health care system, and other vital public services. For instance, together we can send a strong and unified message to the government that our seniors deserve quality, affordable housing; that Albertans deserve better than to be cared for in hallways; and that we deserve access to the highest qualified care givers, rather than the cheapest cost alternative.

Drastic changes to the pension plans were stopped because we stuck together and made certain our elected officials heard our voices, loud and clear. And we did not shy away from asking the tough questions of our elected representatives. It demonstrated the positive change we can make when we work together for a common cause.

*To learn about ways you can make a difference, become engaged, attend a local union meeting.*

In Solidarity,

*Kevin Champagne*

Local 115 President

local115exec@una.ab.ca

## Southern Alberta Regional Office

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## Local 115 Executive

**President:** Kevin Champagne  
**Vice-President:** Kathleen Hamnett  
**Secretary:** Wayne Stopa  
**Treasurer:** Cameron Westhead

## Local 115 Committees

**CDLC Committee:** Nicole Bajada  
**Communications:** Cameron Westhead • Heather Dean • Al Perreault  
**Grievance Committee:** Local 115 Executive • Martin d'Entremont  
**OH & S Committee:** Kathleen Hamnett  
**PRC Committee:** Kevin Champagne • Laura Muenchrath • Leona Wright • Wayne Stopa  
**Portfolio Reps:** Jeunine Champagne • Wanda Deadman • Wayne Stopa • Katherine Kugler • Sandra McGonigal

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## Editors

Cameron Westhead  
Al Perreault



# Alberta Advantage, Or Alberta Disadvantage?

By Cameron Westhead  
Local 115 Treasurer, United Nurses of Alberta

**F**ull disclosure, I'm not an economist or an accountant, but I do know a little bit about the basics of budgeting. A budget has two sides: a revenue side with money coming in, and an expenditure side with money going out. A balanced budget occurs when revenue equals expenditures, a deficit occurs when expenditures exceed revenue, and a surplus occurs when revenue exceeds expenditures.

Considering Alberta's expenditures are ranked 4th on a per capita basis in Canada, we certainly don't spend like drunken sailors, as most right-wing think tanks and pundits would have you believe. Even the right leaning *Globe & Mail* reported in 2013 that Alberta's per-capita spending has not been the highest across Canada since 1993, lagging behind Newfoundland, Manitoba, and PEI (*G&M*, Feb. 9), calling claims of overspending a "myth." The article goes on to say that "Alberta's fiscal problems are 'mostly on the revenue side?..."

Now that world oil prices have dropped 20% since June, 2014, Alberta oil sands producers are reconsidering scaling up or starting new projects, since they are generally only viable at oil prices over \$100 per barrel. A slow down of oil sands production will hit Albertans very hard, due to reduced royalties which make up a

large portion of our government revenue. This means our hospitals, schools, universities, roads, and other essential public services will undoubtedly suffer.

To highlight this and propose a more stable economic plan, one of UNA's affiliates, Public Interest Alberta (PIA), recently launched an "Alberta Could ..." campaign. The premise is that in order to have a more stable economy isolated from the volatility of natural resource royalties, diversity in revenue sources is key. For example, by instituting a fair and progressive income and corporate tax structure, Alberta could raise an additional \$2 billion in revenue for the 2014 fiscal year alone! Sure, in a \$44 billion annual budget, \$2 billion is not that much. However, that money could have funded all of these essential services simultaneously: lower class sizes in K to Grade 3, 10,000 more childcare spaces, 1,000 more long-term care beds, and increase AISH funding by inflation, to name a few.

Alberta is the only province in Canada with a flat provincial income tax regime. PIA's proposal is to invoke a progressive income tax system, where tax rates would escalate on incomes over \$100,000, meaning that 95% of Albertans would not even be affected, and our taxes would remain among the lowest in Canada!

It's time that we recognize that the so-called "Alberta Advantage" is built on a house of cards; risky natural resource royalties that are inherently volatile and undependable, leading us to boom and bust cycles. For the sake of our future, and our children's future, we need to have a grown-up conversation about taxes in this province.

An excellent book on this topic is titled "Tax is Not a Four Letter Word" by Alex and Jordan Himelfarb (2013). Alex Himelfarb knows what he is talking about, having served as Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to Cabinet for three prime ministers, as Canada's Ambassador to Italy, as Deputy Minister of Canadian Heritage, and in senior positions in numerous ministries and agencies. I also encourage you to visit the PIA [Alberta Could...](http://AlbertaCould...) website at [albertacould.org](http://albertacould.org). Talk to your colleagues, friends, and family about this too.

Alberta is a great province. But think about how much better it could be if we diversify our revenues to afford the services Albertans deserve.

In Solidarity,

*Cameron Westhead*

Local 115 Treasurer  
local115exec@una.ab.ca

# Using Personal Leave Days

Under Article 22.08 of the UNA Provincial Collective Agreement signed in 2014, full-time and part-time employees are entitled to three Personal Leave days annually from April 1 to March 31.

These days are for the purpose of attending to personal matters and family responsibilities, including attending appointments with family members.

Employees planning personal leave requests must do so as far in advance as possible. Because of the nature of the request, the ability to give advance notice is sometimes limited. This could mean an employee could request personal leave 8 months in advance or even one hour in advance depending on the circumstances.

The employer must not unreasonably deny requests for personal leave and the requirement to pay replacement overtime is not a reason to deny leave.

Unlike previous collective agreements, an employee does not need to provide their employer with a reason for requesting personal leave and the employer is not to ask.

Because personal leave days are paid at 7.75 hours, if employees work an extended workday, they are able use the additional hours from accumulated vacation or overtime banks.

Personal leave can be used for up to three consecutive days each fiscal year.

If employment commences on or after August 1st of the year, personal leave days will be prorated for the remainder of the year as follows:

- ♦ August 1st to November 30th: 2 personal leave days
- ♦ December 1st to March 31st: 1 personal leave day.

For questions or concerns, contact your UNA local executive or UNA Labour Relations Advisor at 1-800-252-9394.



**United Nurses of Alberta**

# Nurses' unions propose 11 key recommendations to fight Ebola in Canada

By United Nurses of Alberta

The [Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions](#) (CFNU) has proposed 11 key recommendations that would help the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to protect health care workers and the public.

“All prevention preparedness has to begin with the precautionary principle and a commitment to safety first,” said CFNU President Linda Silas. “Given the high risk of transmission with Ebola, it is critical that frontline nurses have the protective equipment to stop the infection from spreading.”

Since the insufficient Interim Guidance on Ebola was produced by PHAC over one month ago, nurses have been raising the alarm on Canada's Ebola preparedness. Their call for stricter guidelines has not been heeded. The CFNU is troubled that PHAC is disregarding the evidence of the potential for aerosol transmission, and failing to protect nurses and mandate proper nurse staffing.

Silas questioned whether the updated guidelines from PHAC will be sufficient to protect health care workers and is concerned that the federal agency continues to question the scientific evidence instead of protecting frontline health care workers and the public.

“We will continue to press the federal government for the needed changes and improved guidelines, but our attention will also be on provincial and territorial governments to at least match the recently released Ontario guidelines,” said Silas. “Nurses will not allow the safety of frontline workers and the public to be compromised again.”

## 11 key recommendations from CFNU:

1. Safety is not negotiable when dealing with infection control.
2. Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Committees must be involved to ensure the guideline implementation.
3. No nurse or health care worker will be in contact with a potential Ebola patient without the proper training and PPEs (personal protective equipment).
4. Workers will be fully-trained, tested, drilled and monitored in both patient assessment and PPE procedures.
5. Policy directives will be established for how to advise patients on where to go for assessment; how to equip separate rooms for triage and separate isolation rooms when needed.
6. PPEs will include at a minimum for low-risk patients an N95, face shield, impermeable gowns, and gloves.
7. For high-risk confirmed cases of Ebola, nurses will be pro-

vided with powered air purifying respirators (PAPR), double gloves, leg and feet covers, and biohazard suits that meet a specified standard.

8. Staffing will be at a minimum two RNs per patient, due to the acuity and complexities of caring for Ebola patients.
9. All health care facilities will implement a communications plan that will provide consistency around national standards and an information number to call.
10. PHAC will deploy a rapid response team to each case of Ebola diagnose.
11. Monitoring and emotional support will be provided to all health care workers in care for Ebola patients, regardless if in direct care or in quarantine as established by PHAC.

The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions represents almost 200,000 frontline nurses, continues to be committed to working with public health agencies across Canada and with employers, to ensure health care workers and the public are protected, and that knowledge and understanding of the spread of disease are raised.

For more information contact:  
Anil Naidoo, CFNU Government Relations  
613-986-5409  
[anaidoo@nursesunions.ca](mailto:anaidoo@nursesunions.ca)



# UNITED NURSES OF ALBERTA - LOCAL 115

Notice of AGM Delegate Caucus Meeting:



November 12, 2014



4pm to 6pm

FMC Auditorium

Our November meeting will focus on reviewing the document package for the upcoming AGM. All AGM delegates should attend, and all members are welcome to attend.

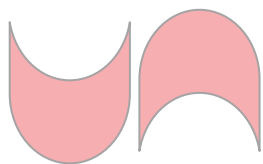
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## New Contract Significant Dates



Date of ratification by both parties: August 7, 2014  
Term of contract April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2017

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| September 17, 2014 | AHS 2% Rate of Pay Change<br>AHS 2% Retroactive Pay from April 1, 2014 to Sept 7, 2014  |
| October 1, 2014    | Implementation of the Extended Benefit Cost Sharing for Parental Leaves                 |
| October 15, 2014   | AHS Payment of 2013 Lump Sum (\$2000)   |
| October 29, 2014   | AHS Payment of 2014 Lump Sum (\$500)<br>AHS Payment of 2014 MCLS Lump Sum (\$875)       |
| January 1, 2015    | Implementation of the New Consolidated Benefit Plan                                     |
| Jan. 5-19, 2015    | Open Enrolment Period for Benefits  |
| April 1, 2015      | 2.25% Rate of Pay Increase  |
| May 2015           | AHS Payment of 2014 Lump Sum (\$500)<br>AHS Payment of 2014 MCLS Lump Sum (\$875)       |
| October 2015       | AHS Payment of 2015 Lump Sum (\$500)<br>AHS Payment of 2015 MCLS Lump Sum (\$875)       |
| January 2016       | Review of Alberta CPI for Relevance of COLA Letter                                      |
| April 1, 2016      | 3% Rate of Pay Increase   |
| May 2016           | Final AHS Payment of 2015 Lump Sum (\$500)<br>AHS Payment of 2015 MCLS Lump Sum (\$875) |
| October 2016       | AHS Payment of 2016 MCLS Lump Sum (\$875)   |
| May 2017           | AHS Payment of 2016 MCLS Lump Sum (\$875)   |

## Are YOU the next Local 115 Portfolio Rep?

The Local has 3 available positions for Portfolio Reps with all terms expiring at the January 2015 Local Meeting, when we expect to hold another election, pending approval at the AGM in December. Portfolio Reps are a key linkage between the Local Executive and our Ward Reps, Human Resources, and Managers. If you like meeting new people, are a good communicator and motivator, this is a role for you. There are funded workshops available for you to attend to assist you in your role, and you will be supported at all times by the Executive. Please contact the Local office at 403-670-9960 for more information.

Please  
Post

# **Local 115**

## **Annual General Meeting**

### **December 2, 2014**

**Parkdale Community Centre**

**Featuring:**

**Guest Speaker Shannon Phillips**

Director of Policy Analysis, Alberta Federation of Labour

***“Why Unions Matter”***

**Contract Interpretation Workshop**

**2015 Budget**

**Election for President (1), Treasurer (1), Secretary\* (1),  
PRC Committee (4), Communications Committee (2),  
CDLC Committee\* (2) Nomination deadline Nov. 25 4pm**

**\*Secretary & CDLC positions are 1 year terms, all other positions 2 year terms**

Lunch included

Register now at [www.115agm.eventbrite.ca](http://www.115agm.eventbrite.ca)

Registration limited to the first 300 Local 115 Members

Voting open to all members during polling hours (12:00 to 16:00)

Local 115 members will be paid for their time in attendance, request a union LOA now!

Doors open at 08:15

Call to Order at 09:00, Adjournment 17:00

403-670-9960

[local115exec@una.ab.ca](mailto:local115exec@una.ab.ca)

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