



Passage of Toby's Law a historic victory for transgender rights

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TORONTO – CUPE Ontario and human rights activists across North America are celebrating the historic passage of Toby's Act in the Ontario Legislature on June 13. The new law, which amends the Ontario Human Rights Code to include gender identity and gender expression, makes Ontario the first major jurisdiction in North America to provide human rights protection for transgendered people.

“This historic legislation means that future generations of Ontarians will grow up knowing they are protected from discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression,” said Fred Hahn, president of CUPE Ontario. “It is an important first step to ensuring that all transgender members of our community have equal access to good jobs, housing and protection from harassment.”

CUPE Ontario has supported Toby's Act since it was first introduced by NDP MPP Cheri DiNovo as a private member's bill in 2007. The Act passed on Wednesday was the fourth version of her private member's bill and was supported by all three parties in the Ontario Legislature.

“We have been proud to stand with Cheri DiNovo and the NDP in support of Toby's Act since the beginning,” said Hahn. “When this law was first proposed, no other political party had the courage the NDP did to stand with transgendered Ontarians. Cheri DiNovo's and the NDP's dogged pursuit of this legislation has resulted in every political party in Ontario now recognizing this is not a partisan issue but a fundamental human rights issue. Wednesday was a proud day to be an Ontarian.”

CUPE Ontario is the province's largest union. It represents more than 230,000 workers in five main sectors: health care, school boards, municipalities, social services and universities.

“Now that we've achieved this important legislative protection, CUPE Ontario will continue to work with our 230,000 members to advocate for that day when all transgendered people are integrated, valued and celebrated in our workplaces and in our communities.”

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