



## Local Statement Against Contract Extension Proposal

The contract extension proposal unanimously endorsed by our National Executive Board (NEB) undermines the democracy of our union, and fails to address the many wounds inflicted on postal workers over the decades. To reclaim our dignity and begin the process of revitalizing our union, we must vote down this proposal.

### Unsanctioned Negotiations at the Expense of Membership Empowerment

Our union was once a beacon of strength because it understood our class power as workers manifests from an organized and mobilized membership. It is no coincidence that by forgetting this truth our union has steadily weakened over the past 30 years and our jobs as postal workers have only grown worse.

Article 6 of the CUPW National Constitution centers our membership, not union officers, as the ultimate bargaining authority of our union. This spring, close to \$1 million of our dues were spent to hold Regional conferences where more than 900 elected delegates debated demands generated by every CUPW local. The resolutions passed at the eight Regional conferences should then be compiled into a program of demands by the NEB. Only after this program is ratified by our membership in a national vote can the NEB then approach Canada Post Corporation (CPC) to begin negotiating on our behalf.

### Moving in the Wrong Direction

At no point did our members direct the NEB to extend the current imposed contract or to engage in negotiations with Canada Post without our program of demands. By ignoring our constitutionally outlined democratic process and all the time and money delegates spent in this process debating demands, the NEB is signaling it knows better than us what our priorities are. Even if this choice was made with the best of intentions, it displays a fundamental misunderstanding of what makes a union powerful -- the will of our membership, not the abilities of individual negotiators.

The core demands formulated by our membership are clear: RSMC and Urban units should be merged, the two-tier wage system should be abolished, work restructures and SSD should be subject to CUPW approval, and wages and benefits should, at the very least, scale with inflation. Of greatest concern, our members want a postal bank staffed by CUPW members, not big banks being subsidized by CPC to use our infrastructure for their own gain. Once a big private bank entrenches itself, it becomes another substantial obstacle in the way of public postal banking, not a step towards it. None of our core demands were properly realized in the NEB proposal, never mind the countless other supplementary demands.

### Opportunity in Crisis - Fighting Forward

Rejecting this proposal gives us until at least Spring 2022 before negotiations potentially escalate into job action. This is more than enough time for locals to do the work the NEB has proven unable to do by building direct bridges to one another to properly organize our members, together. We win by empowering our members locally and coordinating ourselves, not by waiting for help from above.

The NEB's proposal is disheartening but it provides dissatisfied members a tremendous opportunity to assert a new direction for our union. Vote 'No' to reaffirm our membership as the ultimate authority of CUPW! Vote 'No' to show CPC our dignity cannot be bought! Vote 'No' to embrace a grassroots campaign to fight forward for our demands!

**Motion:** That our local reject the proposal recommendation by the CUPW NEB and actively seek out, and work with, other like-minded CUPW locals and activists to promote a 'No' vote.

*This motion and statement was unanimously endorsed by the CUPW 730 Local Executive and CUPW 730 Local General Membership Meeting (July 11, 2021).*