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MANITOBA'S PUBLIC-SECTOR WORKERS GET THEIR DAY IN COURT AGAINST UNCONSTITUTIONAL WAGE FREEZE LAW

PARTNERSHIP TO DEFEND PUBLIC SERVICES DEFENDS RIGHT TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

(WINNIPEG) Manitoba's public sector workers are getting their day in court against the Pallister government's heavy-handed and unconstitutional wage-freeze law, announced the Partnership to Defend Public Services, which represents more than 110,000 Manitoba workers.

"The Pallister government's heavy-handed wage freeze law fundamentally undermines collective bargaining rights," said Manitoba Federation of Labour President Kevin Rebeck, on behalf of the PDPS. "Today, Manitoba's public sector workers are going to court to challenge this unfair and unconstitutional law."

The PDPS is seeking to have the law struck down on constitutional grounds. Rebeck emphasized that the partnership is not seeking an outcome to public sector agreements, but is fighting to protect the process of free and fair collective bargaining, which has been recognized as a right under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"We cannot let the Pallister government get away with trampling over our Charter-protected right to collective bargaining. We are proud to stand up for working people and for fairness, and that means fighting to have this law struck down," Rebeck added.

Rebeck added that he is disappointed that the Pallister government has prevented meaningful collective bargaining from happening in the public-sector, because it is a process that has been shown to work for employees and employers time and time again. He also noted that despite attempts by the Pallister government to stall and adjourn the proceedings, the PDPS is glad to see that the rights of public-sector workers will be heard in court. The trial is expected to last until December 5, 2019.

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The Partnership to Defend Public Services represents more than 110,000 workers who are members of: AESES, CUPE, General Teamsters Local 979, IBEW 2034, IBEW 2085, IBEW 435, Operating Engineers of Manitoba Local 987, LALA, MAHCP, MGEU, MNU, MTS, PIPSC, UA Local 254, PSAC, UFCW 832, UMFA, UNIFOR, USW 7106, USW 7975, USW 8223, USW 9074, UWFA, WAPSO IFPTE Local 162, BUFA, IATSE Local 63, UBC Local 1515, PCAM, and the MFL.