

# Unions make a difference in people's lives

[www.canadianlabour.ca](http://www.canadianlabour.ca)

The Canadian Labour Congress speaks for millions of working Canadians and their families.

Like many, we are optimistic there can be progress on issues of fundamental importance to Canadians in the coming months. We also believe that the Government of Canada should build on its Throne Speech commitments with quick action – in the 2005/06 budget and in accompanying legislation – on these critical issues.

**Quality Accessible Child Care:** The Government of Canada should quickly enact legislation that guarantee standards, accountability and funding for early learning and child care in all Canadian jurisdictions. An initial commitment of \$1 billion to programs that meet these requirements should flow from the 2005/06 budget.

**Retirement Security:** Canadians are growing worried about maintaining a decent standard of living after they retire. Restoring their faith in the public and private pensions they depend on is an urgent priority. The Government of Canada can signal its commitment to this goal by appointing a Minister of State for Pensions and Retirement Security, addressing the need for higher Old Age Security (OAS) and Canada/Quebec Pension Plan (CPP/QPP) benefits, and amending Canada's bankruptcy laws to protect pensions and wages.

**Employment Insurance Fairness:** Employment Insurance rules must allow Canadians to qualify for benefits when they need them. Benefits should be available after a minimum of 360 hours of work. It is also time to look at Training Insurance so Canadians can upgrade their skills, remain competitive and we can meet emerging skills shortages.

**Jobs and Economic Development:** The Canadian Labour Congress has a plan to sustain Canada's economy and provide good, family-supporting jobs. Our plan includes government support for new job-creating investments, support for worker adjustment, setting a realistic value for the Canadian dollar, and investment in the economic transition required to implement the Kyoto Accord.

**Health Care:** The First Ministers' Accord is a significant step toward improving health care for all Canadians but it requires further action. The Government of Canada must ensure that public dollars are used exclusively for the public, not-for-profit delivery of health care. Mechanisms to ensure accountability for health spending are essential.

We share a common goal: providing people with a good quality of life and a decent standard of living. By working together on these five priorities, we can take Canadian workers, their families and their communities, closer to that goal. Please contact the Canadian Labour Congress to find out more.

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Congrès du travail du Canada