

# 2018 Bargaining Update

We have received some inquiries from MNU members about the status of bargaining. Unfortunately there is little to report, but below is a review of developments to date.

MNU served notice to bargain in December 2016. Your PCBC met in January 2017, finalizing our package of proposals. Since then, the employer has refused to set dates for bargaining. Our contract expired on March 31, 2017.

In March 2017 the provincial government introduced Bill 28, The Public Services Sustainability Act, and Bill 29, The Health Care Bargaining Unit Review Act. Both bills have been passed in the Legislature, but neither have been enacted by the government. Though they are not officially law in Manitoba, both bills have already had significant effects on bargaining.

Bill 28 effectively removes our ability to forward any proposal that has a cost implication to employers. It specifically bars any settlements between public sector employers and unions that provide any type of salary increase, additional remuneration or benefit enhancement in the first 2 years of the legislation and provides limits of .75% and 1.0% in the following 2 years.

Bill 29 sets out a procedure to reduce the number of bargaining units within the health care sector and force representation votes between the unions. The effects of Bill 29 may include the addition of nurses currently represented by other unions, the alteration of the base agreement used by MNU, and the need to harmonize all existing agreements into one comprehensive agreement. None of these processes can begin before the legislation is enacted, a commissioner is appointed, and regulations are set.

MNU is challenging the constitutionality of Bill 28 in court in coalition with other public sector unions. The Partnership to Defend Public Services represents 110,000 public sector workers from over 30 unions. Our challenge includes a request for an injunction that, if successful, would prevent the government from enacting the bill. Our first court date is scheduled for the end of May. The process will be lengthy and may not provide timely relief from the imposed wage controls.

Bargaining has not progressed despite our continued willingness to meet with the employer. We continue to monitor the effects of this legislation, and we will keep members updated on any new developments.

Thank you for your patience and for your continued support.