



THE CONFEDERATION OF CANADIAN UNIONS

September 15, 2011

Re: Letter Regarding Upcoming Provincial Election

Dear Editor,

The upcoming Ontario election on October 6th will be exceptionally important for working people in the province. It is vital that people get out and vote.

I often hear friends and colleagues say that their vote doesn't matter. As Ontarians who care deeply about freedom and democracy, we need to dispel this notion and demonstrate, especially to young people in the Simcoe community, that every vote counts.

My organization, the Confederation of Canadian Unions, is spearheading a voter education drive called "Have Your Say, Vote Your Way." We have sent questionnaires to the four major parties and have received responses which are posted on our website at www.ccu-csc.ca. The questions deal with economic issues, health care, education, the environment and workers' rights, among others.

The right to vote is just that - a right. This hasn't always been the case. In Canada's early days, voting was a privilege that only a select group of wealthy men could participate in. It has only been about 90 years since men and women of any class have had the right to vote, and even this says nothing of the huge barriers faced by Aboriginal peoples in Canada, who for decades were preventing from voting.

There are a number of websites to help voters understand the issues and how policies will affect their lives. It is important to review the parties' websites, those of your local candidates and interest groups, pamphlets you receive in the mail, and articles in the local media. You will learn a great deal and empower yourself with confidence to make the right voting choices on October 6th.

I also often hear that people are confused and turned off by the misinformation and constant stream of negative media images from the five major political parties. Although there is a great deal of conflicting information, it is vital to fully understand the positions of the parties and their leaders on important issues.

There are also opportunities to attend a local debate or speak to your candidates when they come to your door. Don't be afraid to ask them questions that pertain directly to you or a problem you're facing.



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I encourage people to do some research and involve your children in understanding our political system, one that they will one day inherit.

I hope to see a record voter turnout in Simcoe on October 6th. I encourage all citizens who are eligible to have your say, vote your way!

In Solidarity,

Joanie Cameron Pritchett
President, Confederation of Canadian Unions

"Have Your Say, Vote Your Way" campaign located at www.ccu-csc.ca/OntarioElection2011.html