



Elect Dave Kissack For President

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Brothers and Sisters of Unifor National Council 4000

As you are aware I am running for President of Unifor National Council 4000. I would like to thank everyone who supported me in the initial voting process for their tireless efforts, although we still have a long road ahead of us to victory in this campaign.

The position of Council 4000 President is the most significant leadership role within our Council. The incumbent to this position needs to bring extensive experience in collective bargaining and conflict resolution. They need to be well versed in labour law and current human rights legislation and be familiar with all aspects in the arbitration processes. They need to be able to direct and assist the Regional Representatives and the locals and have a well-rounded understanding of all the workplaces and collective agreements under the jurisdiction of Council 4000. I believe my nine years as a Regional Representative servicing both Via Rail and CN Rail, time spent on the Council executive, assignment as the Council 4000 Skilled Trades Coordinator and additional formal training makes me the most qualified and best candidate for this position.

I believe it is important prior to the final vote that I now take this opportunity to further detail to all the members of National Council 4000 what my campaign platform is based on and where I feel the direction of this Council should be going in the future.

Here are some of the goals that I wish to achieve as Council President:

Building Strong Union Engagement with the membership

Our first and foremost goal needs to be to engage with all the members. This Council is at a crossroads, members do not feel that they are fully supported by the union. We need to ensure all the Regional and local representatives are fully engaged with the membership. Unfortunately, I believe these elections have done more to brake rather than build and enhance our solidarity. If members don't trust the union or feel we are meeting their servicing needs then we need to find out why and take immediate steps to correct this. We need to hold all our locals accountable and be prepared to pursue whatever changes are necessary to build our solidarity, better service our membership and be transparent in all our actions while at the same time recognizing that we need also to be fiscally responsible and accountable to the members.

United Participation in Collective Bargaining

We need to meet with all levels of the union prior to bargaining including the local Presidents, the Regional and local representatives for the related groups. One of the lessons I have learned in my last three terms as a Regional Representative is that our bargaining demands need to be consistent with the issues facing the members in the workplace to be effective. Simply gaining wage increases is not enough we need to strive for improvements in

benefits and working conditions for all our members. Proper engagement requires that we meet with the member representatives prior to and after completion of negotiations to have the full participation with all levels of the Council in the process.

Full Modernization of our Operating Systems

Our Council needs to continue with the modernization of our web based Grievance handling and tracking systems. Members grievances and issues need to be resolved faster. All too often employers use the fact the union is slow in advancing grievances against us. Along with former President Barry Kennedy, I was instrumental in convincing the Council to modernize all our computer based operating systems to the Microsoft 365 operating platform. The Regional Representatives are now using this system. We also have a technology servicing company that ensures our systems are fully updated and operational. This allows the Council to be better prepared to process grievances, communicate their status with the members and expedite cases to arbitration, but we need to continue fully implementing these systems throughout all areas of the Council.

Developing Web Based Training Systems

We as a Council are spread out from one end of the country to another. As such the Council and the locals incur significant costs and lag time for our local members to access training. While the PEL programs offer a great advantage many of them are nonspecific and generalized to cover other sectors, nor do all groups within the Council have Paid Education Leave negotiated into their contracts. We therefore need to develop web based and alternate training systems which are assessable to all our members and specific to the industry they work in. The same grievance handling course that is efficient for our Rail sector may not be transferable to the members in our Road Transportation sector or smaller independent workplaces due to the dynamics of the workplace. We should provide industry specific standardized training which our workplace representatives can access at their convenience and use for reference. Education is the key to empowerment.

Strengthening Community Involvement

We need to become more involved in supporting our members, the communities they live in and advance the social policies of the union through political action. It is not enough that we belong to a union. Our Council needs to be active in changing social policies and political agendas that shape our workplaces and our communities.

Communication with the Members and Social Media

We need to expand our social media based systems. While we have a great and informative website for the council itself, we should broaden our social media so all members from coast to coast can openly discuss our issues in a common forum and build solidarity. All too often employers use the lack of communications between the five locals of this Council to their advantage. We need to implement a better system of communication between the Council Executive, Regional Representatives and the locals. The management of companies we service communicate internally daily, yet our Council Executive and Regional Representatives only meet a few times a year. This is not productive especially when we can easily and readily skype on our Microsoft 365 platform.

Building a Council 4000 Reference Library

Formation of a web based data reference library. This system will include such things as links to legal sites, duty to accommodate reference materials and full arbitration cases which will include not only the decisions but the briefs as well. By implementing this system, we can provide a reference library for future representatives to access as to provide a smooth transition when new members take office with the resources they need to get the job done.

Advanced Training for Regional Representatives

Additional training needs to be foremost provided to the Regional Representatives. Currently once members enter into these positions it is assumed they have certain skillsets and knowledge, this is not always the case. All too often we are seeing employers transitioning from labour relations departments to legal departments to resolve labour

related issues. Our representatives must be properly trained to counter the aggressive policies and practices we see employers utilizing. Although we now have great support from our Unifor National Staff Representatives we need to ensure our Regional Representatives are up to speed in such things as duty to accommodate and pre-arbitration case preparation to be efficient and effective.

Growth and Expansion

Council 4000 needs to be willing to grow and expand. We need to build on the strategies developed in eastern Canada to bring more workplaces and members into the Council. In the modern era, it is not enough to be a Rail or Transportation Council. We need to be open to expansion into other sectors if the opportunities arise. We can achieve this by doing such things as building on the recognition of our Skilled Trades base and its representatives as to diversify to make the Council more appealing to other sectors and businesses seeking to organize.

Building Strong Committee Involvement

We as a Council need to further develop and empower our various committees. I was recently successful in advancing a motion I developed for the implementation of a woman's committee into the Unifor National Rail Industry Council. This enables all our sisters in the entire rail sector to now have a voice. We need to expand this recognition to our sisters in Council 4000 with a woman's committee. Also, we need to pursue all employers to provide funding for woman's advocate programs such as the ones which were negotiated at Via Rail. Council 4000 needs to recognize and implement a national committee for our LGBTQ Brothers and Sisters to provide them with support from the union and a venue to voice their issues in the workplace. We as a union will become greater by recognizing and respecting our differences and by treating each other with dignity and respect. We need to press employers to recognize and embrace employment equity in the workplace. Most of all we need to get the youth of this Council engaged, trained and active so they can transition this Council into the future.

Brothers and Sisters, I have touched on only a few of the key performance indicators which we as a National Council need to further develop. I am sure

there are many more points that will be raised during these elections and in the future which we will have to face. My vision for the future of this Council is to build our solidarity so that everyone's voice is heard regardless of where you work, who you are, what language you speak, what your beliefs or opinions are and what job you do. Everyone in this Council matters and deserves to be heard and treated with dignity and respect whether it is from our union, our coworkers, the employers we work for or the customers we serve. If elected President of this Council I will strive for nothing less!

I won't make any promises to you that I can't keep soliciting your vote for President. That is not responsible leadership. Nor am I prepared to denigrate or discount my counterpart to pursue my own campaign. You can all form your own opinions from his experience and campaign literature. What I can say without hesitation is that we need to make significant changes to the way we are operating and I am willing to listen to all members of this Council in order that we can better serve you. We need to modernize the way we do business to make our Council strong and engaged so that all employers feel our presence in the workplace. United we stand, divided we fall, that is what solidarity really means. We need to work together as a team. To achieve this, we must be fully prepared to put the past behind us and move forward. It will by no means be an easy road, understandably many are resistant to change. If elected, I look forward to all the challenges that may come with the position and the opportunity to work with and for all of you.

Finally, I ask that you take the time to fully review the qualifications, platforms and elections materials of both the candidates running in this final election. That way you can make an informed decision on who to vote for and that you foremost exercise your right to vote. Many people before us in our union fought hard to ensure you have that ability, please respect the sacrifices they made and the work they did by voting and supporting our union.

In Solidarity Dave Kissack –Please feel free to follow our campaign on Facebook at “Dave Kissack for President”



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