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OPSEU Convention 2005 highlights

OPSEU Convention 2005 made a number of key decisions. Delegates:

- Re-elected President **Leah Casselman** and First-Vice-President **Warren (Smokey) Thomas** for another two-year term.

On **social and political issues**, Convention delegates also:

- Expressed overwhelming support for **same-sex marriage** rights.
- Passed a resolution calling for a union-specific program on **environmental protection**.
- Supported increased funding for **children's mental health** services.
- Supported a consultation process with locals to determine whether the union should affiliate with the **New Democratic Party**. **The results of the consultation are to be presented at Convention 2006.**
- Condemned the McGuinty government's **Local Health Integration Networks**, and passed six recommendations for making them more accountable.
- Supported the Ontario Health Coalition campaign against **managed competition in home care**.
- Urged the McGuinty government to implement the recommendations of the **Rae Review into post-secondary education**.
- Urged a common front with the Public Service Alliance of Canada, representing federal government employees, to challenge the "**common counter**" approach to services.

On issues affecting the **labour movement, workers rights, and health and safety**, Convention delegates:

- Urged the province to extend bargaining rights to **part-time college employees**, and supported a campaign to organize them.
- Made **labour law reform** the central focus of the union's political agenda.
- Supported the Ontario Federation of Labour campaign to have **International Labour Organization (ILO)** conventions applied to Ontario labour legislation.
- Encouraged OPSEU area councils to support a CLC-sponsored "**Mal-Wart Day**" on May 7, aimed at supporting UFCW's organizing drive for Wal-Mart workers.
- Demanded the installation of **heart defibrillators** in all OPSEU worksites, with training on how to use them.

On **internal OPSEU matters**, delegates:

- Increased the maximum union **childcare allowance for members** to \$112 for a 24-hour period.
- Passed the **annual union budget** projecting \$66.9 million in dues revenue for 2005, forecast a deficit of \$1.65 million in the union's operating fund, with the Strike Fund expected to reach \$35 million by the end of this year, amended to include an additional staff position of **Equity Officer**.