



Representing Contract Faculty, Teaching Assistants, Graduate Assistants,  
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Canadian Union of Public Employees/Syndicat canadien de la fonction publique local/section locale 3903

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CUPE Local 3903

**RE: Local CUPE 3903 Request to change the exclusionary convention dates**

Dear members of the National Executive Board,

We would like to express our deepest concerns that the upcoming CUPE National Convention overlaps with Yom Kippur, which begins the evening of Tuesday October 8, 2019 and ends the evening of Wednesday October 9, 2019. Holding the Convention over Yom Kippur, one of the holiest days in the Jewish Calendar, will serve to discriminate against our Jewish members who are observing the holiday.

Given the importance that CUPE leadership gives to accessibility and diversity in participation, we as the CUPE 3903 Executive Committee strongly encourage the National Executive Board to revisit the Convention dates. The current schedule excludes a large number of members, which ultimately prevents them from participating in the business of the National Union. Should the Convention dates not change, present delegates will not represent the diversity of our membership. The September 2017 National President's Report stated that: "We must be vigilant in our efforts to celebrate diversity and inclusiveness; and we must not let ourselves become divided in our fight against white supremacy, racism, islamophobia, anti-Semitism and violence." Exclusion is not diversity. Inaccessibility is not inclusiveness. Erasure will breed division. In a time when anti-Semitism is experiencing a resurgence, what message does it send to our Jewish members to ask them to pick between their most important holiday and the National Convention?

We urge you to take this matter seriously and ensure the full participation of all aspects of CUPE membership by changing the Convention dates.

In solidarity,



Gizem Çakmak