

November 2008

## TO ALL CUPE CHARTERED ORGANIZATIONS

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

### DECEMBER 1 – WORLD AIDS DAY

December 1 marks yet another World AIDS Day. The United Nations campaign to stop AIDS started in 1988. Yet the incidence of HIV/AIDS only increases, even in Canada!

The theme of this year's World AIDS Day is "leadership". The campaign calls on all sectors of society including trade unions to take the initiative and provide leadership on AIDS.

According to the UN, estimates are that 39.5 million people live with HIV, including 2.3 million children. During 2007 some 4.3 million people became newly infected. Nearly half are youth under 25. HIV/AIDS today is a threat to men, women and children on all continents around the world. In Canada Aboriginal people are most at risk.

HIV/AIDS has not gone away. There is still much to be done.

HIV/AIDS is a union issue. CUPE members have HIV/AIDS, work with members with HIV/AIDS and work to prevent HIV/AIDS.

December 1 provides members and locals with an opportunity to publicly re-commit to taking action – show leadership – in the HIV/AIDS fight. Make a financial contribution, plan to include language in the collective agreement to protect workers with HIV/AIDS, educate members about HIV/AIDS, join the global fight, lobby the federal government to live up to its commitment to supply inexpensive drugs to developing countries and wear a red ribbon.

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