



Canadian Union of Public Employees • Local 1281

25 Wood Street, Suite 102, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2P9
416.551.0057 F: 647.350.4049 admin@cupe1281.ca

www.cupe1281.ca

Attn: YUFA President Ellie Perkins & the YUFA Bargaining Team

Via email: esperk@yorku.ca

November 19, 2025

Dear President Perkins & the YUFA Bargaining team:

We write as members of CUPE Local 1281 and as articling students. We first wish to express solidarity with our fellow members of Local 1281 employed at YUFA. We also wish to briefly comment on the issues we see surrounding YUFA's invocation of section [1\(3\)\(a\)](#) of Ontario's [Labour Relations Act, 1995](#) (which purports to prevent certain white-collar professionals, including lawyers, from unionizing) in its ongoing dispute with our local.

Unions should be exemplary employers. They should, in their capacity as employers, demonstrate why workers should unionize and why the labour movement matters. YUFA's own constitution highlights the Association's objective [to advance free democratic trade unionism](#). Their employment relations should reflect the values they live by in advocating for their membership and advocating for workers generally. It troubles us to see a union rely on this exclusion in dealing with its employees.

Provisions like section 1(3)(a) did not make much sense even at the time of their creation almost a century ago. However, for the last decade, these provisions have not just been bad laws but at best [dubiously constitutional](#) laws. In 2015, the Supreme Court recognized that **every** worker has a right, protected under section 2(d) of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, to [meaningful association in the pursuit of workplace goals, including the right to bargain collectively](#). It said the government [could not pass laws that "substantially interfered" with that right](#). And yet, sitting right there in black and white on the statute books of this province (and few others, because most of them repealed similar provisions half a century ago), is section 1(3)(a), substantially interfering with professionals' right to bargain collectively.

Let us be clear. There are hundreds of thousands if not millions of people working precarious, dangerous, low-paying, or simply exhausting jobs for uncaring and abusive employers in this country. As articling students, and legal professionals generally, we are relatively fortunate. As lawyers, we will be even more so. But even the most well-positioned workers deserve better than this, especially when their employer is a union. We all deserve the right to bargain collectively. We hope that YUFA and CUPE 1281 can amicably resolve their differences at the bargaining table and that both unions can focus on what really matters: fighting for the interests of workers and for a stronger labour movement—and fighting *against* attempts to minimize workers' *Charter*-protected right to collective bargaining.

In solidarity,

CUPE 1281 Sub-Units

Talia Vreugdenhil, Shop Steward - Articling Students at Koskie Minsky LLP

Yashleen Jhand, Shop Steward - Articling Students at Ryder Wright Holmes Bryden Nam LLP

Peter Ling & Brittany Williams, Shop Stewards – Articling Students at Ursel Phillips Fellows Hopkinson LLP

Beatrice Henshaw, Shop Steward – Articling Students at Cavalluzzo LLP