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If the TTC is “essential,” then fund it, don’t deny the right to strike

TORONTO, ON - CUPE Local 3902, the Union that represents over 6,000 teaching assistants and sessional lecturers at all three campuses of the University of Toronto, adds its voice to the chorus of opposition to declaring the TTC an essential service.

“This is not really about recognizing the essential nature of public transit and the valuable service provided by those who work in it,” said Robert Ramsay, CUPE 3902 Chair. “It’s solely about denying TTC employees the right to strike. We agree with CUPE Ontario President Sid Ryan and others in the labour movement that the right to strike is fundamental.”

Many UofT students and instructors rely on the TTC to get to their place of study and work. But the passage of provincial back-to-work legislation against TTC employees was not welcomed by the Union that represents these education workers.

“Denying the right to strike, either temporarily through back-to-work legislation or permanently by essential service designation, only adds to the problem of crisis management that plagues the TTC,” continued Ramsay. “A real solution would be to fund public transit adequately. I imagine that if the provincial and municipal governments truly believed the TTC to be “an essential service,” they would make that funding commitment.”

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For more information please contact:

**Robert Ramsay, CUPE Local 3902 Chair
Mobile: 647.236.3902**

**Chantal Sundaram, CUPE Local 3902 Staff Representative
Mobile: 647.223.3902**

**CUPE Local 3902
902-180 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2V6
tel: 416.593.7057/416.978.7632 * fax: 416.593.9866
info@cupe3902.org * www.cupe3902.org**