

News Release

**Co-op Refinery workers reject latest offer**

**For immediate release**

**Tuesday, March 21, 2017**

**Regina**—A record turnout of Unifor Local 594 members have overwhelmingly rejected the company’s so-called final offer on Monday night.

“Workers have sent a crystal clear message to Co-op’s management: drop the concessions,” said Kevin Bittman, Local 594 President. “Co-op’s owners are massively profitable. Demanding concessions from the workers who contribute to Co-op’s success is unnecessary and unfair."

Located in Regina the Co-op Refinery Complex is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Federated Co-operatives Limited (FCL), a firm that made upwards of $500-million in profit in 2016.

Earlier this month the City of Regina granted a housing permit for temporary structures for what the union says will house replacement workers in the event of legal job action.

“Forcing us onto a picket line is one thing, but attempting to run a large-scale refinery with a skeleton replacement crew with questionable qualifications is a public safety risk,” said Bittman. “The City Council has potentially endangered residents by caving into Co-op’s demands.”

Unifor is calling on the City of Regina to revoke the housing permit and force Co-op’s managers to resolve the labour relations situation at the bargaining table. The collective agreement between Local 594 and Co-op expired over one year ago in January 2016. Unifor has met with the employer 21 times in bargaining until an impasse was reached in January 2017. The union entered mandatory mediation but the employer refuses to drop its most aggressive concessions. A 14-day cooling off period ends at midnight on March 30.

Unifor is Canada’s largest union in the private sector, representing more than 310,000 workers. It was formed Labour Day weekend 2013 when the Canadian Auto Workers and the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers unions merged.

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