



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL ENGINEERS AFL-CIO & CLC

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April 1, 2025

Honourable Wab Kinew
Premier of Manitoba
Premier's Office
204 Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8
Email: premier@manitoba.ca

Dear Premier Kinew,

It was a pleasure meeting with you at the AFL-CIO/CLC Solidarity Roundtable in Washington, D.C., in February. We were encouraged to hear about your government's commitment to labour and working families.

We write on behalf of [TEAM Union, IFPTE Local 161](#), representing over 425 working professionals across Manitoba. We are gravely concerned about the steady erosion of jobs in our union and the broader telecommunications sector since Bell Canada acquired MTS in 2017 and designated Winnipeg as its Western headquarters. We respectfully request your assistance in taking decisive action to stem these job losses and safeguard these skilled, well-paid positions for future generations of Manitoban workers.

Telecommunications has long been a cornerstone of Manitoba's diversified economy. Since 1970, TEAM has proudly represented Manitobans in a variety of fields—from IT and network engineering to sales, marketing, business administration, and finance—initially with MTS and now with Bell. In 2006, TEAM affiliated with the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), which represents over 90,000 members across North America.

When Bell took over MTS in March 2017, TEAM had nearly 900 members, constituting a significant portion of the approximately 2,300 unionized workers¹ at the company. Since that time, our union has witnessed a significant decline in local jobs. Year after year, positions are being cut from Manitoba, outsourced overseas or to contractors, or shifted to other parts of Bell's operations. At the same time, opportunities for internal career advancement, as well as co-op and student placements with our post-secondary institutions, have greatly diminished.

Today, fewer than 1,500 unionized jobs remain at Bell in Manitoba, and the TEAM membership has fallen to under 450 people, representing a 35% reduction in Manitoba's unionized workforce at Bell and a 50% decline in TEAM members.

¹ [CCPA Report, "For Whom the Bell Tolls: The Privatization of Manitoba Telecom Services and its Impacts", by Doug Smith - June 2023.](#)

Bell recently announced yet another round of downsizing that will eliminate an additional 100+ jobs in Manitoba, as part of a broader reduction of 1,200 unionized workers across Canada, including over 70 more TEAM positions.

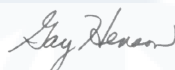
These cuts not only impact the workers directly affected but also place enormous strain on those who remain, increasing workloads and workplace stress and negatively impacting services and supports available to the public.

Given these significant challenges, we respectfully request your government's immediate assistance in addressing this critical issue. In addition to any measures you can initiate to preserve local employment, we would greatly appreciate the opportunity to meet with you or a member of your team to discuss further strategies and collaborative efforts to protect our workers' livelihoods and to protect telecommunications jobs in Manitoba.

Yours sincerely,



Matthew Biggs
IFPTE President



Gay Henson
IFPTE Secretary-Treasurer



Rebecca Caron
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SUP Local 160



Richard Mahé
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