

March 15, 2023

TO:

**The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario (premier@ontario.ca;
doug.fordco@pc.ola.org)**

**The Honourable Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training
and Skills Development of Ontario (Monte.McNaughtonco@pc.ola.org)**

**The Honourable Graydon Smith, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry
(Graydon.Smith@pc.ola.org)**

Dear Premier Ford and Ministers McNaughton and Smith,

SUBJECT: WINDSOR SALT LABOUR DISPUTE

On behalf of 315,000 Unifor members across Ontario and the rest of Canada who serve as a backbone of the private sector, I am calling on the Government of Ontario to do everything in its power to encourage Windsor Salt's owners to bargain a fair collective agreement that respects the long history of the union in these workplaces.

As I'm sure you're well aware, 250 members of Unifor Locals 240 and 1959 working at the Windsor salt mine and evaporation plant have been on strike since February 17. These hard-working employees of Windsor Salt – Canada's oldest and largest salt producer, and a staple of kitchen pantries across the country – were forced into a labour dispute they did not want after Windsor Salt's U.S.-based owners demanded that they accept outrageous concessions before negotiating financial matters.

Windsor Salt was purchased in 2021 by Stone Canyon Industries, a California-based holding company that has aggressively acquired salt companies across North America and is now one of the largest salt producers in the world. Stone Canyon's market footprint has grown so large that the U.S. Justice Department forced it to divest one of its subsidiaries, US Salt, before completing the deal that led to the acquisition of Windsor Salt, since the merger was deemed likely to lead to "to higher prices and lower quality for consumers."¹

This holding company, which now has a virtual stranglehold over Canada's salt supply, has decided in its very first round of bargaining with its Windsor employees to demand that they accept the contracting out of union work as a precondition of bargaining, threatening the very existence of the union itself. It has also enlisted the support of the

¹ <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/stone-canyon-required-divest-us-salt-acquire-morton-salt>

U.S.-based law firm, Jackson Lewis, which actively runs 'union avoidance' training programs, to pressure these workers into submission.

Premier Ford and Ministers McNaughton and Smith – this is not how we do business or negotiate contracts in Ontario.

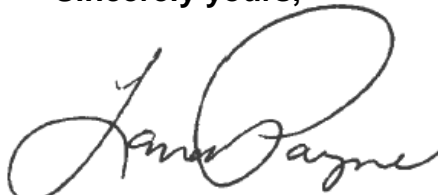
Ontarians respect the collective bargaining process as a fundamental part of workers' rights and we do not use the threat of stonewalling as a bargaining tactic to force unacceptable concessions onto our negotiation counterparts before the conversation has even started.

The members of Unifor Locals 240 and 1959 have been prepared, from the start, to listen to the employer's concerns and to offer their own proposals on how to improve Windsor Salt's operations. However, that discussion cannot happen if Stone Canyon simply refuses to come to the bargaining table.

It's time to end this labour dispute and make sure that Windsor Salt's workers are able to bargain a fair deal for themselves, their families and the broader Windsor community that they've contributed to for generations. We ask you to call on Windsor Salt's owners to negotiate a contract with its workers in good faith.

Please see here, for your information, our letter to the Ontario Teachers Pension Plan Board, sent yesterday - <https://www.unifor.org/news/all-news/letter-ontario-teachers-pension-plan-board-re-windsor-salt-strike>.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lana Payne', written in a cursive style.

LANA PAYNE
National President

LP/bmkcope343

Enclosure

cc Andrew Dowie, MPP, Windsor–Tecumseh (Andrew.Dowie@pc.ola.org)
Lisa Gretzky, MPP, Windsor West (LGretzky-QP@ndp.on.ca)
Jodi Nesbitt, President, Unifor Local 240 (jodi@uniforlocal240.ca)
Bill Wark, President, Unifor Local 1959 (local1959@bellnet.ca)