

Please Come! - Rally at the Toronto Autoshow - Sunday February 15 11am

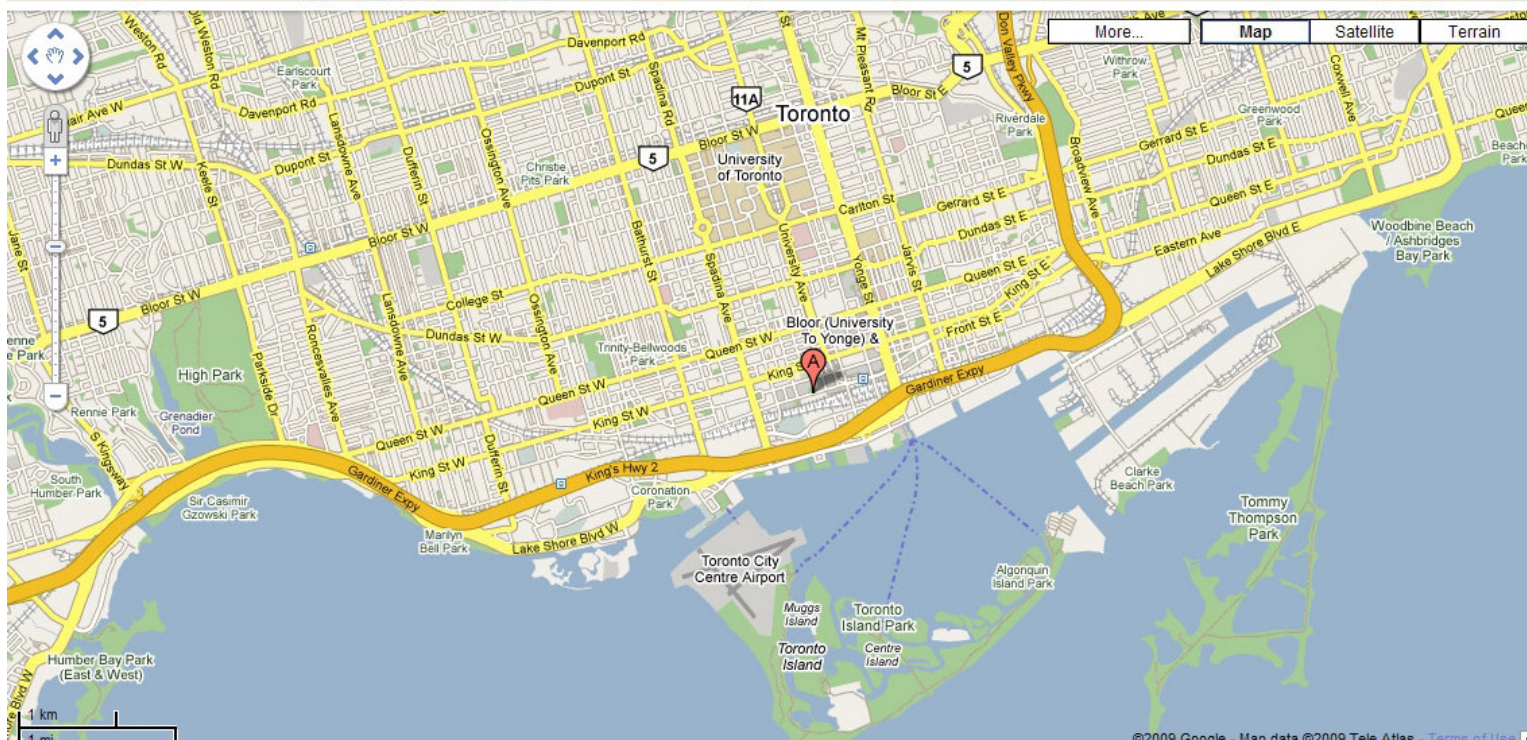
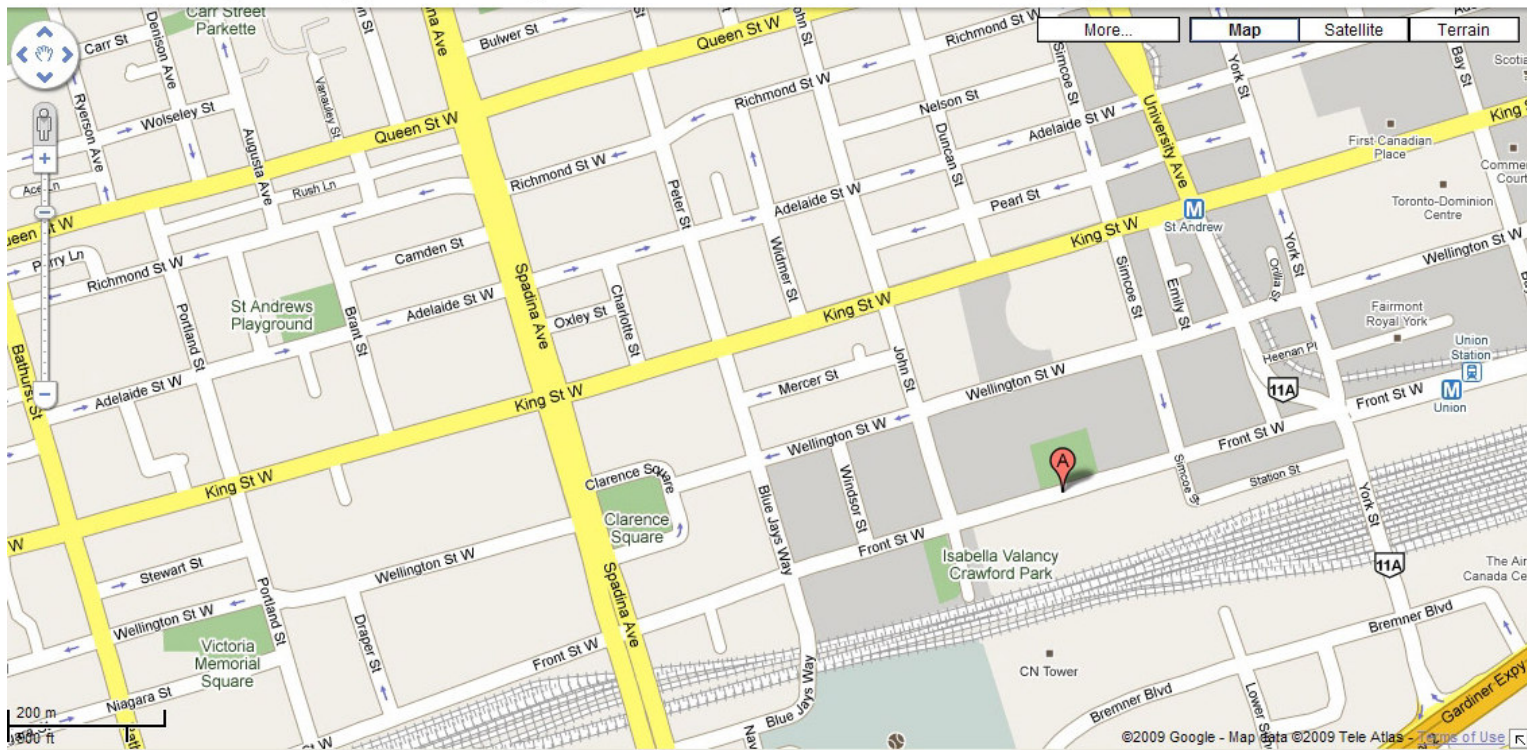
Everyone's invited to the demonstration / rally at the 2009 Canadian International Autoshow!

This Sunday, Greater Toronto Area workers are joining along side rank-and-file autoworkers from the Oshawa, Brampton and Oakville autoplants.

Over this Family Day Long Weekend, GTA workers are setting aside part of this Sunday to stand in solidarity to support their fellow workers employed at Big Three automakers and parts plants.

People are bringing their own signs and placards. Some say just how they feel, with messages like: "Unions are not to blame!" and "Can't work for just food" Please bring your own signs as well.

Supporters from the region are also encouraged to fly their flags, banners and standards in solidarity. See the collage of supporter's flags that were out at a recent worker rally.



International Auto Show Rally / Demonstration (Sunday January 11, 2009 Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A.)

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Detroit Auto Show Auto Worker Rally - 2009



On January 11, 2009, active and retired autoworkers, labor and community activists, and others concerned about the future of U.S. manufacturing, healthcare, the environment, the economy, and working families rallied outside Cobo Hall in Detroit during press day of the North American International Auto Show.

They advocated for Single-Payer Health Care Bill H.R. 676, bold green jobs legislation, fair trade, the Employee Free Choice Act and other concrete solutions to remedy decades of failed corporate and government policies.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjpKQyNcvx8>

Canadian Auto Show Rally/Demonstration

(Sunday February 15th @ 11am Toronto)

Brothers and Sisters,

The worldwide financial crisis has led to a crisis in the auto industry. All of the auto companies are affected, but the Detroit three – who employ members of the Canadian Auto Workers – are in particular danger. The recent loan guarantees, passed by the US, Canadian and Ontario governments are meant to provide breathing space for them to survive. That is important to the US and Canadian economies.

But the loan guarantees also contain conditions. Some of them make demands on the companies. These remain “secret” for now. Others attack the rights of unionized autoworkers in both countries: they demand that unionized workers at the Detroit Three “match” the labour costs of the non-union transplants; they require that our union go into bargaining with the employers and give back concessions to meet that demand; they require that Canadian workers respond to the demands of the right-wing US senators from the US south, and the rump of the former Harris government of Ontario, who now occupy the power jobs in Harper’s Federal Cabinet. The Ontario Liberal government of Dalton McGuinty has also come on board with the conditions.

Like our union’s leadership, we realize the terrible situation we are in today. It would be extremely difficult to refuse to engage in concession bargaining, given the circumstances. Not only are we not mobilized (after too many previous rounds of concessions), but public opinion in general tends to be negative about the survival of the auto industry and the role of autoworkers in defending the rights of all working people.

In order to survive and come out of this crisis in a stronger position, we have to do what we can to influence the current situation. This means:

- Building support among other working people for the defence of the wages, benefits and working conditions of unionized auto workers, under attack from right-wing governments in the US and Canada and the employers;

- Explaining why the survival of the Detroit three is important for our overall economy, and to create conditions for building the kind of auto industry that working people need in this 21st century. This is not the same as being the spokespersons for GM, Ford and Chrysler. It does mean we know that their survival is important and need to explain it to others.
- Showing that the wages, working and conditions of unionized workers in Canada have nothing to do with the crisis facing the employers and arguing that there is no justification to demand that Canadian (or American workers for that matter) should somehow “match” the non-unionized transplants. And, in the process emphasizing that the US and Canada are the only countries in the world that are demanding worker concessions as part of the auto help package.
- Putting forward the need to challenge the right of the US government, the Harper Conservatives and the employers to demand concessions from Canadian workers as a condition for the survival of the employers;
- Supporting efforts to minimize the concessions we will be forced to give up and calling for a plan to get the losses back in the future.
- Building support for the union’s efforts to create “Buy Canadian” procurement policies by governments.
- Finally, support for plans to restructure the auto industry so that it can provide sustainable jobs and products in the future.

Like the busloads of American autoworkers who protested at the American Auto Show in Detroit, we are organizing our own demo for the Canadian Auto Show, in front of the Metro Convention Centre, Front Street, in Toronto, on Sunday February 15th, at 11:00 AM.

In solidarity,

Workers For Union Renewal