

BULLETIN

## Three cheers for Chilliwack!

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Almost a year has passed since the Liberal government was elected, and already the signs are clear that British Columbians are taking a second look.

On February 20, I joined with several HSA members and another 2,000 people for a rally in Chilliwack to protest the mean-spirited Campbell agenda. While Premier Campbell was inside talking to the Chilliwack Chamber of Commerce about his government's first budget, 2,000 people were outside the hotel telling their stories about their experiences of the Campbell government.

The signs said it all:

- Bargaining (is)/**was** a democratic right!"
- Stop the cuts"
- Campbell's cuts affect you too!"
- Let's make a deal to keep us in BC"
- LibEral**"
- Shame, shame, shame."
- Recall • this fall (bye-bye Penner)"
- Five years university for a decade-old wage?"

The Chilliwack rally, organized by the Chilliwack Coalition of Concerned Citizens, was a strong message to local MLA Barry Penner that the Campbell Liberals are on the wrong track. HSA President Cindy Stewart joined with representatives from student, community and other labour organizations to send a message to the government that Chilliwack, just like communities throughout the province, wants their MLA to hear from them ... not just representatives from the business community.

The focus for HSA in the past several months as the Campbell government continues to unroll its agenda of broken promises and broken health care has been to meet with local MLAs to help them understand what the government's agenda is really going to mean in local communities. And it will continue to be our focus.

Throughout the province, HSA members are meeting with their MLAs, participating in rallies and marches, and getting involved in the local coalitions springing up to oppose Liberal government-driven closures of local services ... including courthouses, hospitals and other important community services.

As the full effects of Bill 29 start to hit health care facilities, HSA members will be looking to the union to support you in protecting your rights. The union is working with other affected unions on a legal challenge to

the legislation, and the labour relations staff are in constant contact with stewards.

We all have a responsibility to stand up for our jobs and our health care system. Without the active involvement by members ... such as the HSA members who were out in force in Chilliwack ... our voices wont be heard.

The unions new Strategic Communications and Member Development department was created to support HSA members who want to get more active in your union. Please take advantage of the education, research, organizing and communications support the department offers, and help HSA be heard. ❌

*Audrey MacMillan represents Region 7 on HSAs Board of Directors.*

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