

Statement



Unifor Statement on the Trans Day of Remembrance November 20, 2019

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) is an annual observance on November 20 that honors the memory of the transgender and gender diverse people whose lives were lost in acts of anti-transgender violence.

This year is the 20th annual TDOR. Gwendolyn Ann Smith founded that first day of remembrance to honor the memory of Rita Hester, a transgender woman and local educator who was killed in 1998. While we memorialize the legacy of transgender and gender diverse people, it is important to recognize the resilience of the community in the face of harassment and violence.

The experience of anti-trans violence and persecution proved to be universal, and since that first vigil, the recognition of TDOR has spread to cities and communities around the world.

Transgender Europe, a network of organizations combatting trans discrimination through advocacy and community building, has counted 331 trans people who have been murdered in the last 12 months alone. Anti-transgender violence is hate crime that disproportionately impacts people of color and trans women of color. Migrants make up a high number of reported murders in Europe, and of the reported killings worldwide, 61 per cent were sex workers.

Unifor encourages all members to build safer communities, workplaces, and local unions for trans members.

The work to end violence against trans and gender diverse people begins at home by supporting local transgender and LGBTQ organizations, participating in local marches and candlelit vigils, and learning about the pervasive problems experienced by trans and gender diverse people. Trans Day of Remembrance shows us that there is much work to be done to put an end to anti-trans violence.

To ensure that trans members receive the support they may need, local unions can bargain complete coverage for medical procedures that may be required including; hormone therapy, gender-affirming surgery, wigs, voice classes and counselling.

As the global refugee crisis expands, trans and gender non-binary refugees face heightened discrimination because of their gender identity.

Unifor Locals are encouraged to support organizations that provide services to LGBTQ refugees, through monetary donations, volunteering, and other forms of community engagement.

The safe, supportive communities that we seek to create will only be built if working people unite. That requires all workers to stand together on this Trans Day of Remembrance.