

January 26, 2026

Mr. Fred Hahn
President, CUPE Ontario
c/o
Mary Unan, CUPE Communications



Sent via E-Mail: munan@cupe.ca

Re: CUPE Ontario Submission to OMERS Reviewer

Fred:

I write to you on behalf of the more than 7,000 members of COTAPSA, the City of Toronto Administrative, Professional, Supervisory Association. COTAPSA has been in existence since 1966 and is the oldest and largest Municipal Management Association in Canada. As you know, our members are contributing members of the OMERS pension plan.

We note that CUPE Ontario has made its submission to Robert Poirier, the OMERS Reviewer, available for download.¹

We wish to register COTAPSA's very strong disapproval of how that submission characterizes the relationship of our members to OMERS. Specifically, we dispute the following:

- That the question of providing “non-union or management associations” with OMERS board seats should be considered “to be well-examined and fully settled”;
- That Tony Dean's casual musings as the previous OMERS Reviewer regarding the non-representation in OMERS governance of management/non-union OMERS members from more than a decade ago are somehow still relevant to matters today;
- That the concept of “representation by population” can somehow be used by CUPE Ontario to insist its role in OMERS governance be maintained as is – but at the same time, this concept should not apply to the approximately 1-in-4 active members of OMERS who fall into the “management/non-union” designation, or provide a precedent for their representation in OMERS governance – a truly stunning piece of reasoning.

In addition, we also wish to reject very strongly the claim in the CUPE Ontario submission that COTAPSA's members are somehow tools of their employer, and that our members' interests in OMERS therefore “can and do conflict with those of workers at times on pension issues.”

We contest the submission's claim that “management members” having a presence in OMERS governance would “fundamentally undermine the 50/50 employer/member balance” on OMERS boards.

We appreciate the time that your nearly 100 page submission to the OMERS Reviewer must have required to assemble. We respect your vigorous advocacy for members of CUPE Ontario locals who, like COTAPSA members, belong to OMERS because of statutory requirements.

¹ <https://cupe.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/CUPE-Submissions-OMERS-Governance.pdf>

Advocating vigorously for your membership, however, does **not** give you the right to make misleading statements about the management/non-union component of OMERS membership.

Rather than provide a point-by-point rebuttal of the CUPE Ontario submission, I will limit my comments to the following:

The management/non-union component of OMERS membership is **not** some kind of OMERS employer Trojan horse.

Regarding the individuals who make up COTAPSA, we are **regular, contributing** OMERS members. We, as OMERS members, have been deeply frustrated by the open dysfunctionality of aspects of OMERS governance in recent years. We, as OMERS members, worry about the plan's laggard status as the only large Ontario public sector defined benefit pension plan still in deficit – while all other large DB Ontario plans are in surplus. We question, as does your submission, aspects of OMERS management compensation given OMERS uneven and disappointing recent performance.

In other words – we share **many of the same concerns** as other OMERS members. And when [we have voiced criticism of OMERS](#), it has been to improve the plan, so that it serves all members better – and **not** to advance the interests of employers.

On a related note, CUPE Ontario's ongoing campaign to oppose the Province's Schedule 13 in Bill 68, which requires Sponsors Council members to act under a fiduciary duty, raises a fundamental question of legitimacy and accountability within the OMERS governance framework. CUPE Ontario has consistently insisted that its role as a sponsor was imposed by the Province in 2006 and is therefore settled and unavoidable. The record, however, indicates otherwise.

The *OMERS Act, 2006* did not lock in a permanent list of Sponsors. It established transitional appointments and arrangements and then placed responsibility with the newly created Sponsors Corporation to determine, through its own by-laws, who would serve as OMERS Sponsors going forward.

CUPE Ontario's continued position on the Sponsors Council therefore flows from the Sponsors Corporation's own composition by-laws adopted in 2007, rather than from any permanent or explicit statutory appointment by the Province. Participation in the OMERS sponsor role was, and remains, a matter of choice for your organization rather than a legal obligation.

If CUPE Ontario, or any current sponsor, is unwilling to accept the fiduciary obligations that come with sponsor authority, the appropriate response is not continued participation without accountability, but a formal withdrawal from the sponsor role. In that case, responsibility for sponsorship should be transparently devolved to, or restructured among, those employers or locals whose members and employees are directly enrolled in OMERS, including but not limited to Locals 416 and 79 and the City of Toronto.


Joint sponsorship does not require the permanent entrenchment of any single provincial advocacy organization such as CUPE Ontario. It requires sponsors who are prepared to accept both the authority and the responsibility that the role entails.

While the management/non-union component of OMERS membership still lacks a board seat, COTAPSA has gained, through the OMERS Review, the right to help name a management/non-union OMERS Sponsors Council observer. We're grateful for this shift. The presence of this observer at Sponsors Council meetings will be a big step forward for the interests of our members, for the members of similar associations in Ottawa and Windsor, as well as for the interests of tens of thousands of other OMERS members belonging to the management/non-union category.

Sincerely,



Mike Major
Executive Director



Andrew Waters
President

CC:

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