



Dear CAPE Colleagues,

I am seeking to serve our Association as Director on the National Executive Committee for the 2025 – 2026 term, to serve our diverse colleagues and members across our various departments and portfolios.

Background

I have been working in the federal public service for over 25 years in various areas of the health portfolio, primarily at Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada; and I have worked in various technical, policy, advisory, operational and strategic positions.

Association Related Experience

I have been an active member and former volunteer in our Association for 20 years from 2001 to 2021, primarily at the HC/PHAC CAPE Local 512 in various Steward functions and a former Local President for over 10 years. During my tenure at our Local I was actively engaged on member issues, as well as a representative on all Labour-Management Consultation Committees, where I was the union co-chair of several of these, including the Departmental Policy Health and Safety Committees.

I was previously a three-term EC/LoP Vice-President on the CAPE National Executive Committee (NEC), a two-term former EC Director, and a former member of most of the NEC Sub-Committees, where I chaired both the Finance Committee, and the Constitution and By-Laws Committee; and a Pension Trustee. I also sat on the Local Leadership and Presidents' Councils, and have previously served on oversight committees, such as the Elections and Resolutions Sub-Committee. I have also been privileged to be able to represent our members on CAPE's previous EC Collective Bargaining Committees and Teams.

CAPE Policy Direction

While I am proud to have been engaged in CAPE over the years and worked hard to represent the interests of our members, ensuring respectful and healthy workplaces with an increased focus on mental health and work-life balance, I feel that CAPE needs the political direction and leadership to address our members' needs in terms of representation and mobilization. With recent efforts by the employer to return members to the workplace in a haphazard manner, we will see increased demands for member representation, particularly on accommodation and OHS-related fora, and CAPE has traditionally struggled with membership representation and labour relations capacity to address these issues. Our national Association was particularly silent during COVID, return to the office and Phoenix-related challenges. Only more recently have we seen more outgoing national communication; but there has been limited action beyond these communications, and membership representation is particularly concerning, with limited response to membership issues.

Members also have many outstanding and ongoing Phoenix pay matters, accommodation, harassment, performance management, staffing, health and safety issues, and other employment and labour relation matters; and we need to better support our members when they find themselves in difficult circumstances. This will require additional effort in order to renew and modernize CAPE's internal representation policies and Constitution and By-Laws, to be able to further give voice to our members' concerns.

While our CAPE national Association witnessed several continuous years of annual surplus budgets,



which helped to grow our Legal Defence and Mobilization Fund, there was limited effort by the Association to expand its representation efforts to impact members, and there is considerable need to re-focus our efforts to realign our internal resources and operations. Instead, we saw an expansion of the management cadre at CAPE's national office, in addition to a reduction in financial disclosure and transparency. Our future direction needs to entail an expansion of our member services to better support our Local bargaining unit colleagues, while alleviating excessive workload pressures and demands for our national CAPE office staff, by expanding our professional expertise, hiring additional Labour Relation Officers, to focus on enhanced member representation, in order to vehemently defend our members' collective interests. Coupled with this, we need to expand Local engagement, mobilization and education efforts which have been lacking in recent years, to strengthen and empower our Locals' internal capacity and expertise.

As always, I am passionate about ensuring that CAPE remains a strong, progressive, member-led professional Association, whereby I have spent the bulk of my professional career volunteering for our Association, providing high-quality service to our members and helping to secure strong collective agreements. We now need to better empower, engage and strengthen our Locals and members while providing professional nationwide service to our national membership across our respective bargaining units.

Why I Am Running for the National Executive Committee

Given our current reality these past several years, in light of ongoing challenges, our members are anxious about an uncertain future, with fiscal decline and a minority government, in terms of what this might bring for our collective bargaining position and potential program review for our members in the coming years. This is a time when we need to better position our members' interests, to anticipate these challenges rather than instead continue to remain reactive. As such, we need a new direction in national leadership that can advocate on behalf of members with the CAPE national office for better member representation, that can respond and address these challenges, while giving voice to our members' concerns and anxieties, in a rapidly changing environment, as we face increased pressure to return to the office, during this ever-evolving time.

We need a return to member service, acknowledging members' interests, with a realignment of our Association, moving away from a static business union, to a more dynamic service-based collective, that can more effectively service our members and their unique challenges. We also need to restore internal transparency and financial accountability at the national CAPE level, while ensuring that as an Association, we become an inclusive and representative Executive, which reflects our members' diversity and values. Only with more member engagement, participation, and oversight over our internal matters, will we be able to move forward in a positive light, to build on our collective strengths and face the challenges to come.

I also wish to thank all of my colleagues and all the candidates that have come forward during this election, across the various vacant positions on the National Executive, for their engagement and commitment to our Association. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at (613)316-9923 or nick.giannakoulis@phac-aspc.gc.ca, to reach out to me with your thoughts and questions, and to voice your concerns.

Warmest regards,
Nick