

***Expression of Condolence for John Jamieson Donaldson
by Toronto City Council***

Moved by: Councillor Paula Fletcher

Seconded by: Councillor Frances Nunziata

The Mayor and Members of Toronto City Council are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of John Jamieson Donaldson of Toronto, Ontario, who passed away on May 25, 2026, at the age of 90.

Born in Glasgow, Scotland, John's passion for social justice was expressed through his life-long trade union activism and leadership on the crucial issues of workplace health and safety. John was the elected President of Ironworkers Local 721, where he led relentless efforts to end back-destroying work practices that were the norm in the industry. He helped win legislation that finally gave construction workers the right to have trained representatives and joint health and safety committees on jobsites across Ontario.

John formed alliances with like-minded people within the trade union movement, and beyond, to fight for better wages and safe working conditions. He saw the importance of promoting trade union history and worker education to inform workers of their rights to a safe working environment and to refuse unsafe conditions. He was a skilled negotiator and was not afraid of taking risks or confronting those in power.

John served as a Vice President of the Ontario Federation of Labour and became the first Construction Coordinator at the Workers Health and Safety Centre. Always carrying a sense of humour as well as a fierce loyalty to working people, he kept a picture at his desk of him working at the top of the CN Tower in 1975. John was a loving father, brother, uncle, grandfather, husband, and friend.

The City Clerk is requested to convey, on behalf of the Members of Toronto City Council, our sincere sympathy to John's family and all of those whose lives he has touched and changed.

June 24, 2026