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Statements

Injured Workers' Day Highlights Need for Improved Compensation System

Vancouver – June 1 is National Injured Workers' Day, a day to stand in solidarity with injured workers for the restoration of dignity, respect and justice.

The following is a statement from Irene Lanzinger, President of the BC Federation of Labour:

"Every year the BC Federation of Labour marks June 1, Injured Workers' Day, with a renewed call for improvements to BC's workers' compensation system.

Workplace accidents have tragic consequences and a lasting impact on the workers who experience them, both in physical injuries and often in post-traumatic stress they suffer after the event.

Workers' Compensation Boards across Canada are moving in the wrong direction, and increasingly cutting benefits and compensation to workers who have been injured or made sick because of their work.

The BC Federation of Labour continues to call on the provincial government to improve workers' compensation in three significant areas:

• Ensure that the workers' compensation system provides full compensation for all workers injured, made sick, or disabled at work, including lifetime pensions to those with permanent disabilities and

vocational rehabilitation benefits to support re-training and employment opportunities.

• Pursue criminal prosecution of negligent employers when workers are killed or seriously injured on the job.

• And invest in prevention programs that promote healthier and safer workplaces so that workers don’t get hurt on the job in the first place.

We cannot let the workers’ rights and the compensation system be further eroded. We must strive to ensure every worker returns home safe and healthy, every day. And when injury happens, we must have confidence that the supports are in place to provide for that worker and their family.”

Injured Workers’ Day commemorates the events of June 1, 1983, when over three thousand injured workers, family members and advocates in Ontario traveled to Queen's Park to oppose the Ontario government’s proposal to eliminate the permanent disability pension. The Ontario government retracted its proposal as a result of the outcry from injured workers on this day.

Since then, June 1 has been observed as Injured Workers’ Day across the country.