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Releases

Defending jobs must be priority #1 as Trump tariffs take effect: BC unions

(Burnaby) — The BC Federation of Labour today released the following statement regarding the announcement the Trump regime will levy a sweeping 25 percent tariff on Canadian exports, and a 10 percent tariff on Canadian oil and gas exports:

> British Columbia workers are united. And we stand with our provincial government, businesses, communities and unions across Canada in opposing this unfair attack on all of us.
>
> The provincial government estimates that 124,000 workers will lose their jobs over the next four years if the tariffs remain in place, with BC's unemployment rate rising to 6.7 percent this year and 7.1 percent next year. If left unaddressed, this would be catastrophic to workers and communities across our province.
>
> BCFED President Sussanne Skidmore is working with the provincial government's BC Trade and Economic Security Task Force to keep workers' voices front and centre, and to present a common united front.
>
> Our message is clear: The number one priority of all governments must now be to protect workers and defend their jobs. Workers are the backbone of our economy, and our province only prospers if working people prosper.

Whatever supports and initiatives emerge to help business weather this storm must be tied to preserving workers' jobs. Defending jobs must be both the goal of these supports and the key measure of their success.

We're in close contact with our counterparts in the Washington State Labor Council, who tell us American workers will be deeply affected by these tariffs too. American consumers and industries rely on what workers in BC and the rest of Canada produce. And Canada is the United States' single largest export market, worth over $440 billion in 2023.

Those who echo Donald Trump's rhetoric and advocate appeasement are making a grave mistake. Giving in to his demands will just mean he makes up new ones.

This is a time for British Columbians to come together and stand up for our jobs, our communities and our future. And if there's one thing we know in labour, it's that when we stand united, we win.