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Releases

“This is huge”: BCFED welcomes massive provincial investment in skills training

The skilled trades training investment announced today by the BC government will make an enormous difference to the province’s economy, and open up promising careers to thousands of workers, the BC Federation of Labour said today.

“This is huge, and it’s exactly what we need right now,” said BCFED President Sussanne Skidmore. “This is how you build a strong, resilient economy: by investing in the workers who make it run.”

BC Premier David Eby announced this morning the province will double trades-training funding over the next three years through a $241-million fund. The investment will address waiting lists for critical industries trades and bring more skilled trades into certification, beginning with crane operators.

“Apprenticeships are the gateway to rewarding long-term careers in the skilled trades,” said BCFED Secretary-Treasurer Hermender Singh Kailley. “I’m thrilled thinking of all the opportunities this is going to mean, especially for young workers just entering the workforce.”

In 2003, the BC Liberals slashed funding for skilled trades training. Equally damaging, Kailley said, they gutted the regulations underlying skilled trades certification, triggering precipitous drops in apprenticeships and training.

Today’s announcement, along with the BC NDP’s earlier restoration of skilled trades certification, will position British Columbia as a national leader in workforce training, said Skidmore.

“This will help close the skills gap, so BC has the workforce we need to meet the demands of the coming decade. And it helps ensure BC workers have the skills and experience needed to take on a rapidly changing world,” she said. “With this announcement, the BC government is turbocharging the engine of our economy: our workers.”