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Releases

Amidst the pandemic, the fight against racism and discrimination must be front and centre

Sussanne Skidmore, Secretary Treasurer of the BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) issued the following statement:

“The current health crisis has revealed how undervalued certain critical work has been in our society. I want to start off by thanking the workers on the farms throughout BC for continuing to grow, harvest and process the food that we all need to eat during this pandemic. We are incredibly thankful to these workers, as well as the workers in grocery stores, and those performing all other critical service work, who are on the frontlines of this crisis.

The BCFED is aware of many reports from racialized communities about racism experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The only way to address the pandemic is through collective solidarity. We are committed to supporting racialized workers and ask that we all take the necessary steps to address racism and disrupt racist acts in order to protect racialized workers. Indeed, all British Columbians must stand up against racist comments and acts of violence toward people based on their perceived ethnicity.

During this time, it is important for British Columbians to remain calm, remain safe, and act in solidarity with one another. COVID-19 is not a reason to be racist toward any group of people, no matter where they may be from, or where their ancestors are from.

The BCFED continues to advocate for all workers in BC, especially those most severely impacted by this pandemic. We are calling upon federal and provincial governments to ensure that the most vulnerable workers in this province and across the country are not forgotten as measures to alleviate the economic security of workers are taken. One of the groups that is doing great work on this issue is the Migrant Rights Network. Their calls to action to support migrant workers can be found here.

We cannot and will not let this health crisis be used to divide, or to stigmatize and discriminate against any group. We encourage you to explore the resources available to interrupt racism and to mitigate your own biases on the BCFED equity page."