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Releases

Labour movement celebrates announcement of paid leave for workers dealing with domestic and sexual violence

(Coast Salish territory / Vancouver, BC) - The BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) is lauding the BC government's announcement of five days of paid leave for workers fleeing domestic and sexual violence. Under current laws, workers fleeing violence face lost wages, making it harder for them to access the supports and services they need.

"Today's announcement is a significant step forward for survivors and those dealing with violence," said Sussanne Skidmore, Secretary Treasurer of the BCFED. "Five days of paid leave will make a real, tangible difference in people's lives. Whether accessing the justice system, or health and mental health services—finally workers won't face an economic burden to get the support they need."

The BCFED has advocated since 2016 for paid leave for those experiencing domestic and sexual violence. In the fall of 2019, the BCFED mobilized thousands of workers and allies as part of an online campaign to put pressure on the BC government during its consultations on the issue.

Statistics show that sexual assault is on the rise in Canada and that Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) disproportionately effects women and working-aged Canadians. IPV and sexual violence affect women, trans people, people with disabilities, Indigenous people and people of colour

disproportionately.

“Paid leave will save lives, full stop” added Skidmore. “With this move, BC joins leading jurisdictions in the country and takes a significant step in the direction of achieving equity for marginalized communities.”

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