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Releases

As Uber and Lyft arrive in BC, rights of ride-hailing drivers must be protected

(Vancouver, BC) The BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) responded today to the issuing of licenses to Uber and Lyft by the Passenger Transportation Board (PTB), emphasizing that ride-hailing companies must comply with BC's labour laws and ensure drivers have minimum labour protections under the Employment Standards Act.

"People want safe, accessible transit options. But they also want to know that the workers providing their transit are treated fairly," said Laird Cronk, President of the BCFED. "When companies misclassify workers as independent contractors rather than employees, workers lose access to basic employment rights, like the ability to unionize, access to minimum wage, vacation pay and WCB coverage in the event of a workplace injury."

All over the world, jurisdictions are scrambling to fix problems with unregulated ride-hailing companies. California recently passed legislation to combat the misclassification of ride-hailing and other gig-economy workers, giving them access to minimum wages and other labour protections. The Passenger Transportation Board was silent on the rights of drivers when issuing licences. The BCFED supports UFCW 1518's application to the Labour Relations Board seeking a ruling on the rights of ride-hailing drivers in BC, including the right to unionize.

“Billion-dollar, multinational companies like Uber and Lyft have a responsibility to treat their workers fairly,” added Cronk. “We welcome ride-hailing to BC, but we will continue to stand up for drivers and call on the Passenger Transportation Board to collect and regularly publish data on the earnings and conditions for drivers.”

Media contact:

BCFED President, Laird Cronk, is available for comment after 3pm. Please contact:
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Background:

- Read the BCFED’s submission to the Passenger Transportation Board calling for employment standards protections for drivers here.
- Read the BCFED’s subsequent response to ride-hail applicants here.