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Releases

Contract flipping protections among “measured” recommendations to change BC’s labour code

Working people employed in low-paid, precarious jobs will benefit from changes proposed by an independent panel of experts formed by Labour Minister Harry Bains to recommend improvements to BC’s labour code, says the BC Federation of Labour.

Bains released the panel’s report and recommendations earlier today. He also announced that stakeholders and the public have until November 30th to comment on the report and its proposed changes.

“Tens of thousands of service workers who struggle every day to make ends meet are affected by employer contract flipping,” says BC Federation of Labour President Irene Lanzinger. “This upheaval causes insecurity, and locks these workers into perpetual low-wage employment.

“We are urging minister Bains to go to bat for low-paid workers by ensuring that the protections against contract flipping recommended by the panel are included in legislation the government will bring in next year.”

Previous BC Liberal governments had enabled “contract flipping” which allows employers to use the tendering process to arbitrarily terminate collective agreements and maintain poverty level wages

primarily in construction, food and building services, security and health care.

When workers are flipped, they lose their jobs, wages and benefits, their collective agreements and their union, Lanzinger says.

“One of the most important things the government can do to build an economy that works for everyone,” says Lanzinger, “is to improve the well-being of workers in contracted services by ensuring they have some form of job security—called successorship—to address issues around poverty and inequality.”

Lanzinger says the labour movement appreciates the hard work of the independent panel, which consulted broadly in their months-long work. “We don’t agree with all their findings, which we will address in the minister’s request for feedback; but the panel’s recommendations are measured, and will help foster a more constructive labour relations environment to restore fairness and balance to the labour code,” she says.