October 23, 2018 |

Releases

New provincial legislation will help protect migrant workers from bad employers

Vancouver - Legislation proposed today by Labour Minister Harry Bains is a first step to end the exploitation of vulnerable temporary foreign workers (TFWs) by unscrupulous employers and labour recruiters, says the BC Federation of Labour.

“We support the legislation because it includes a number of concrete measures, like mandatory licensing of recruiters and registration of all employers relying on TFWs, that will better protect workers from abuse,” says BCFED President Irene Lanzinger.

“In addition, the promise of resources for inspection and enforcement along with the prospect of significant financial penalties, exclusion from the program, and potential jail time for violations should be powerful incentives for employers and recruiters to follow the rules and treat workers with respect and decency.”

Despite widespread situations of exploitation, Lanzinger says the previous BC Liberal government did nothing to protect temporary foreign workers from abuse. “So we are pleased that Minister Bains is taking action to fulfill an important election pledge,” says Lanzinger. “It’s another way the NDP government is making life better for workers in our province.

“TFWs who come to Canada under this program harvest the food we need to sustain ourselves. They are the people who raise our families and care for our elderly—they are an integral part of our community. We need to do better by them,” says Lanzinger.

Lanzinger says the Federation is committed to working with Bains and the NDP government in drafting regulations that will set up the new registries and monitoring and enforcement measures.