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Releases

Good-bye to the discriminatory server wage - BCFED applauds commitment to end lower wages for liquor servers

Vancouver – The BC Federation of Labour is pleased with the announcement that the BC government will phase out the discriminatory server wage, ensuring by June 2021 servers will no longer be exempt from minimum wage laws.

“I am relieved that we can say good-bye to the server wage in BC,” said Irene Lanzinger, president of the BC Federation of Labour. “Make no mistake, the server wage is a sexist policy that puts women at risk. It has no place in a fair and balanced economy.”

The issue of exemptions to minimum wage laws was reviewed by the Fair Wages Commission, specifically for liquor servers, live-in caregivers, residential care-takers, live-in camp leaders, and piece rate for farm workers.

“We have long fought to have all exemptions from minimum wage laws removed. Our position is that the minimum wage is the minimum any worker can be paid for any work,” said Lanzinger. “Today we see important progress for workers in two areas – liquor servers and live-in caregivers. But we will continue to push for all exemptions to be removed.”

The government announced further study into how farm workers are compensated for their work.

“The government has indicated that it will further investigate farm worker piece rates. We expect them to do this work quickly and in direct consultation with farm workers,” said Lanzinger.

“This is a group of workers who are particularly marginalized and vulnerable to exploitation. It is critical that the government move forward to make life better for them and ensure fair and decent wages for their work.”

Lanzinger added that she looks forward to the final stage of the Fair Wages Commissions’ work into the transition from a minimum wage to a living wage for British Columbians. “Strong wages are a critical piece to poverty reduction and levelling the playing field for working people.

“After 16 years of neglect that fostered growing poverty in the province, we are finally taking steps in the right direction.”