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Releases

IWD: New BC government committed to making life safer for women at work and at home

The Following is a statement from BC Federation of Labour President Irene Lanzinger for International Women's Day:

"March 8, 2018 marks 108 years since the first International Women's Day was observed. This year the dominant narrative around the status of women in Canada and in BC has been women's safety.

The Harvey Weinstein scandal in the US has started conversations among women who work in the film industry and in other sectors in which women are underrepresented in BC. For the first time women in huge numbers have felt safe to tell their stories of assault or harassment at work. The need to strengthen support systems and reporting mechanisms for these types of cases has never been clearer.

Earlier this week the BC Federation of Labour lobbied politicians at the Legislature in Victoria on women's safety both inside and outside of the workplace. Issues on our agenda with the NDP government included the naming of different forms of gender-based violence in the Workers Compensation Act of BC, the establishment of intimate partner violence (domestic violence) leave in the Employment Standards Act, and the availability of sexual assault services, including the collection and storage of evidence on a 24 hour basis at every hospital in BC.

It was clear to us as we met with five ministers, the premier and other MLAs that the tone in the province of British Columbia has changed drastically. We now have a government that cares about the average British Columbian and will take steps to make life safer for women and other equity seeking genders in BC.

The deck has been systemically stacked against working British Columbians for sixteen years. The meetings the Federation had this week show that we are working with a new government that wants to level the playing field for working people in this province."

The BCFED represents roughly 500,000 union members across the province, the majority of whom are women, making it the largest democratic institution representing the interests of women in the province.