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Releases

BCFED demands action from government to keep workers safe in Day of Mourning march at Legislature

Labour activists today marched on the legislature in Victoria carrying 100 coffins to mark April 28th the National Day of Mourning for workers killed or seriously injured on the job, and to demand action from the provincial government to do more to keep workers safe on the job.

“We extend our condolences to the families and colleagues of workers who have died in the past year, and to those who’ve been injured or harmed by illness” says BCFED President Irene Lanzinger.

“We believe every workplace accident and death is preventable,” Lanzinger says. “All workers must enjoy the basic right to on the job protections, and to come home safely to their families at the end of the work day.

But over the past year, the Clark government has chosen not to take action to keep workers safe on the job,” Lanzinger says.

The well-being of workers is being compromised because the rules are weak and not always rigorously enforced. Injured workers aren’t fairly compensated. And, employers whose negligence kills or seriously injures workers are let off with a slap on the wrist.

At the ceremony, Lanzinger highlighted a number of tragic, high profile workplace deaths caused by employer negligence to make the case for tougher consequences. “Employers cannot be allowed to negligently kill or seriously injure a worker with impunity,” she says.

In 2016, 164 BC workers were killed on the job or died from occupational diseases. Additionally, more than 100,000 injuries and occupational illnesses were reported last year.

Lanzinger also criticized Clark’s pre-election promise that if returned to office, her government would siphon off more than $800 million in funds for injured workers and gift it to employers.

“When more needs to be done to keep workers safe on the job and fairly compensate those who are killed or injured, it’s an outrageous political move,” says Lanzinger.

“Safer workplaces and better protections for workers depend on British Columbians electing a new government on May 9th,” she says.

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