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Releases

Throne speech glosses over fundamental social, economic problems for working people in BC

Vancouver - Today's Speech from the Throne offered few concrete measures to make life better for hard-working British Columbians, nor did it deliver real action to address the growing poverty and inequality crisis that is too prevalent in our province, says the BC Federation of Labour.

"It was the same platitudes, and same old excuses from a tired government that's run out of gas," says BCFED President Irene Lanzinger.

"But it did serve to spotlight the magnitude of the social problems and the massive social deficit that 16 years of Liberal government have created, along with the urgent need for a new government that will address these challenges," she says.

Lanzinger says there was nothing in the speech that spoke to the plight of the 500,000 British Columbians who work for poverty-level wages and the poor in BC.

"We live in an incredibly wealthy province. But when it comes to how that wealth is shared, BC is a deeply unequal place where a small group controls most of the wealth.

"So the abject failure of the Clark government to tackle poverty and inequality are symbolic of what's wrong with our province.

“The Throne Speech also failed to offer tangible help for the problems for working people and our families,” says Lanzinger. “It’s tougher to get ahead. Wages are flat or going down. Life is less affordable, and Premier Clark and her government are making us pay more for the basics like hydro, car insurance, and health care.”

Lanzinger says that if Premier Clark really cared about good jobs, there’s lots the Liberals could do starting with raising the minimum wage to $15 to lift 500,000 workers out of poverty.