April 30, 2014 |

Releases

Two Year Minimum Wage Freeze Hurting BC Workers; B.C. Federation of Labour Calls for Minimum Wage Review

Vancouver – BC Minimum Wage workers have had their wages frozen since May 1, 2012. The B.C. Federation of Labour is calling on the BC Government to increase minimum wage to $13.00 per hour and convene an independent panel of labour and business representatives to recommend future increase.

The BC Government committed to reviewing minimum wage every second year to ensure that minimum wage workers don't fall further below the low-income cut-off.

> "We are going to be reviewing this every two years, that is part of the commitment so every second year we will continue to do a review of minimum wage so it is not going to be a change that we make today and then come back and look at in a decade. We are going to come back and look at it in two years, and then two years after that, and then two years after that." – Premier Christy Clark, March 16, 2011

"It is unacceptable that BC's minimum wage workers continue to live below the low-income cut-off," said Jim Sinclair. "The BC Government has a responsibility to ensure that British Columbians are making fair pay for a day's work."

Almost half of minimum wage workers are over 25 years old with 8.2 percent of those in the 55+ age category. Following BC's 2011 minimum wage rate increase of $2.25, there was a net gain of 54,000 jobs in BC and a decline in unemployment. BC continues to have the highest child poverty rate in Canada with 1 in 5 children living in poverty.

British Columbia is out-of-step with other Canadian Provinces in continuing the politicized ad-hoc approach to minimum wage freezes. BCFED backgrounder Minimum Wage. Seattle, WA is considering increasing minimum wage to $15.00/hr, and the Seattle-Tacoma Airport Authority has recently adopted a $15.00/hr minimum wage.