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Releases

B.C. Federation of Labour calls on RCMP to investigate allegations of fraud and theft against Tim Hortons

Vancouver - B.C. Federation of Labour President Jim Sinclair today called on the RCMP to launch an investigation into Tim Hortons in light of serious allegations of theft and fraud committed against a number of its employees who are Temporary Foreign Workers.

According to claims by the workers, their boss at a Fernie, BC Tim Hortons demanded cash payments for any overtime wages they received. As well, workers allege they were asked to make payments to cover the employer's cost for the Temporary Foreign Worker Program.

Sinclair said these allegations go well beyond infractions covered by BC's Employment Standards Act, and if true, likely constitute serious criminal offenses.

"There is rarely a sufficient penalty leveled against the employer by the provincial Employment Standards Branch," said Sinclair. Despite the federal government's promise to increase enforcement, and many well documented cases of exploitation, few employers have been cited for non-compliance.

"This case is yet another example of the shameful exploitation that happens with Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker Program," said Sinclair. "And while this case itself warrants an RCMP investigation, the program itself is equally to blame."

“Tim Hortons is an iconic Canadian franchise, yet they are among the most significant users of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program. If they are proudly Canadian, as their marketing claims, it’s time they joined us, and most British Columbians, in calling for an end to this abusive program,” Sinclair said. “None of us are looking for a cup of coffee or a donut at the expense of exploiting workers.

These allegations follow on other serious human rights allegations by migrant workers from Mexico which have landed Tim Hortons and a Dawson Creek franchise owner in front of the BC Human Rights Tribunal.

-30-

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