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Releases

In the face of a weakening economy and more cuts to public services, the B.C. Federation of Labour is calling for the government to convene a business and labour summit to find solutions for the province

Victoria--In the face of today's revised budget, which showed British Columbians facing increased unemployment, lowered economic growth, declines in housing starts and retail sales, and further cuts to services, the British Columbia Federation of Labour has renewed its call for government to convene a business and labour summit to find solutions for the province.

"We are ready to find answers that will create jobs, train British Columbians, and protect critical services such as healthcare and education," said Jim Sinclair, President of the B.C. Federation of Labour. "Cutting services when the economy is weakening is the absolute wrong thing to do."

Sinclair pointed to recent announcements that British Columbia Hydro was $342 million dollars over budget on the northern electrical line, in part due to the lack of skilled trades, shows that more money, not less, is needed for training in British Columbia.

"We should not be leading the nation in the growth of the temporary foreign worker but in turning out skilled workers to build our economy and our communities," Sinclair. "Creating jobs is not enough--

filling those jobs with British Columbians has to be our goal.”

The budget contained an additional $130 million dollars in cuts over the next three years. In addition, the budget update predicts an additional loss of more than 4,000 public service workers over the next three-year budget cycle.

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For more information contact: Summer McFadyen, 604-785-3661.