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Releases

Injured Workers' Day Highlights Need for Improved Compensation System

Vancouver, BC – The B.C. Federation of Labour is marking June 1st as Injured Workers' Day with a renewed call for improvements to BC's workers' compensation system and a restoration of benefits for injured workers, Federation President Jim Sinclair said today.

The B.C. Federation of Labour and its affiliates recognize June 1, 2013 as Injured Workers' Day in BC – a day to fight in solidarity with injured workers for the restoration of dignity, respect and justice for injured workers.

"Workers' Compensation Boards across Canada have buckled to corporate pressure to cut benefits and compensation in order to lower premiums," said Sinclair. "These one-sided changes leave injured workers without adequate coverage of the principles of the historic compromise agreed to by labour and business 100 years ago."

Sinclair said that government has a responsibility to ensure that the workers' compensation system provides full compensation for all workers injured, made sick and disabled at work, including full cost of living protection, real jobs and job security, or a pension for life if workplace injuries or disease result in a permanent, lifetime disability.

To renew BC’s workers’ compensation system, the B.C. Federation of Labour is urging the BC government to:

- Re-establish equity on the WCB Board of Directors;
- Re-establish the WCB mandate to “make injured workers whole,” i.e., provide full compensation;
- Provide lifetime pensions to those with permanent, lifetime disabilities; and
- Re-establish vocational rehabilitation benefits that meet the needs of injured workers by improving both their employment qualifications and options for employment and thus improving their quality of life.

Injured Workers’ Day commemorates the events of June 1, 1983, when over three thousand Ontario injured workers, family members and advocates traveled to Queen's Park to oppose the Ontario government’s proposal to eliminate the permanent disability pension. The Ontario government retracted its proposal as a result of the outcry from injured workers on this day.