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Releases

Employee Action & Rights Network Fights to Bring Back Grant's Law

Vancouver, BC-The Employee Action and Rights network held sit-ins at Mac's Convenience Stores in Vancouver, Victoria and Nanaimo beginning at 7:00 April 12th and lasting until 6:00 am Saturday April 13th to stand in solidarity with workers everywhere who have to work alone during late-night hours in retail environments. The events were planned to raise awareness of the changes to the working alone legislation encompassed in Grant's Law that were implemented on April 15th of last year. The changes state that employers may now have a panic button and a security camera during late night hours instead of abiding by the previous legislation that required employers to have at least two workers on shift or have a barrier in place to protect workers from customers.

These sit-ins, paired with an ongoing public awareness campaign spearheaded by EARN, the B.C. Federation of Labour's Occupational Health and Safety Committee, and the DePatie family, are designed to prompt government to restore Grant's Law to its original strength. Grant's Law was named after 24-year-old Grant Depatie who was working alone as a gas station attendant and died at work due to a gas and dash incident.

"It's past time that our government showed a real interest in protecting workers at work, rather than continuing to cater to the requests of businesses such as Mac's Convenience stores," says Stephen Von Sychowski, Chairperson of EARN.

EARN activists chose Mac's Convenience Stores because Mac's were the most vocal in the lobbying efforts to have the third option added to the working alone legislation in Grant's Law. This option allows employers to use a panic button and security camera instead of having two workers on shift or having a barrier in place to protect workers during late night hours.

"I don't think there's any parent who can say they would be happy about their child coming home and saying that they got a new job working the graveyard shift at the local gas station alone," states Jim Sinclair, President of the B.C. Federation of Labour. "If it's not good enough for your kid or my kid, it's not good enough for anyone, and we need to fix that."

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