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Releases

Families Unveil Model of Farm Workers' Monument at Annual Vigil

Abbotsford, BC – Six years after the van accident that took the lives of three farm workers in the Fraser Valley, more needs to be done to make farming safe in our province, B.C. Federation of Labour President Jim Sinclair said today at an Abbotsford vigil honouring the women.

The vigil, jointly hosted by the B.C. Federation of Labour, Progressive Intercultural Community Services, Abbotsford Community Services, and the women's families, included the unveiling of a beautiful model of the monument that will be erected in memory of the women.

"We are overjoyed with this beautiful monument, designed in remembrance of our lost wives and mothers," said Jagjit Sidhu, husband of deceased worker Sarabjit Sidhu. "It represents our continued struggle to make farm worker safer. We are proud to dedicate this monument to all farm workers in BC."

Sinclair said the monument would serve as recognition of all women and men who have lost their lives working to put food on our table, and as a lasting reminder of what happens when governments don't adequately protect these workers.

Mr. Charan Gill CEO of PICS Society, Surrey said, "it is an historical project for farm workers in Canada. I am confident the community will raise the funds to ensure this monument is completed by

2014 and am grateful for support from the province."

The province of BC and the Workers' Compensation Board have committed $100,000 to the monument project. Fundraising continues to ensure the project can be completed. Charitable donations, cheques made payable to Abbotsford Community Services, should be sent to:

Golden Tree Monument Project
c/o Abbotsford Community Services
2420 Montrose Avenue
Abbotsford, BC V2S 3S9

Since the coroner's inquest into the accident, not all of the 18 recommendations have been fully implemented, leaving many farm workers exposed to unnecessary risks. The B.C. Federation of Labour continues to advocate for full implementation of the recommendations.

During the event, members of ACS read a short poem:

"On March 7, 2007, 14 workers were injured and 3 were taken from us that day. They worked long hours, doing dangerous work for little pay. May we now build a monument so these workers memory will never go away."

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