

BC Employment Standards Coalition

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Workers Survey Shows BC Employers Failing to Meet Basic Regulations & Calls for Revisions to Employment Standards Act

Vancouver, BC, Canada – May 4, 2017 – Today, the [BC Employment Standards Coalition](#) released a summary of its forthcoming report, [“Workers’ Stories of Exploitation & Abuse: Why BC Employment Standards Need to Change.”](#) The report exposes employer violations of BC’s Employment Standards Act, and proposes revisions to the act that will protect unrepresented workers from abuse and exploitation. It also marks the first time in twenty-five years that British Columbia workers have been given a voice to publicly share their experiences with BC’s employment standards law and enforcement.

Over the past six months, the BC Employment Standards Coalition held a series of workers’ story forums across Metro Vancouver and Victoria. During these forums, coalition members interviewed workers about their experiences with employment standards violations, issues with enforcement, and areas where the Employment Standards Act failed to protect them. After the forums, the coalition analyzed their findings, and began crafting a report that would give workers a voice, and propose changes to the legislation necessary to improve the minimum employment standards for all BC workers.

The report summary details violation issues that need to be addressed immediately. For example, an overwhelming majority of workers reported “wage theft,” lack of breaks, miss-classification of employees as self-employed, violation of employment contracts, improper termination, and excessive work hours. The report also raises serious concerns about employers charging fees for temporary foreign workers, failing to keep proper records, and denying their employees leave and sick days.

The “Workers’ Stories” report illustrates a failure of the BC Liberal government to proactively enforce the Employment Standards Act and encourage workers to submit complaints of violations. “Over the past fifteen years, workers have found themselves in increasingly precarious, low paid and exploitative jobs – a fact that has been widely recognized across Canada,” says David Fairey, co-chair of the coalition. “But in BC, the inadequacies of the Employment Standards Act and its enforcement has worsened the problem.”

The full “Workers’ Stories” report will be published in June.

About The BC Employment Standards Coalition

The [BC Employment Standards Coalition](#) campaigns for decent wages, working conditions, and respect and dignity in the workplace. The coalition is comprised of individual members, representatives from worker and community legal advocacy organizations, public policy researchers, labour lawyers and volunteer advocates.

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