

BC Employment Standards Coalition

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Report exposes violations of basic workplace rights and calls new government to immediate action

Vancouver– August 31, 2017 – On Monday, Labour Day, the BC Employment Standards Coalition will release a new report – [*Workers’ Stories of Exploitation & Abuse: Why BC Employment Standards Need to Change*](#) — that documents widespread employer violations of BC’s Employment Standards Act. The report also exposes the failure of the provincial government to enforce basic workplace rights. The Coalition calls on the new provincial government to act swiftly on the report’s recommendations.

In 2016 and 2017, the BC Employment Standards Coalition held a series of workers’ forums across Metro Vancouver and Victoria where workers described their experiences with employment standards violations, issues with enforcement, and areas where the Employment Standards Act failed to protect them.

The Coalition heard from 145 workers about wage theft, lack of breaks, employment contract violations, improper termination, excessive work hours, and unequal treatment as temporary workers. The coalition’s report gives a voice to workers’ concerns and proposes legislative reforms intended to improve the economic security of all working people.

“The ‘Workers’ Stories Report’ is an indictment of the previous government’s callous reduction of rights and protections for workers in the province – especially the most vulnerable,” says David Fairey, co-chair of the coalition. “The findings expose the government’s failure to enforce the Employment Standards Act, and the urgent need to address gaps in existing legislation.”

The report also raises serious concerns about employers charging fees to temporary foreign workers, denying sick days, bullying workers and the lack of basic rights for farm workers. Additionally, it proposes new rights and protections for the large and growing numbers of precarious workers in the service economy.

“The stories we collected illustrate the need for the new government to act quickly to modernize basic workplace rights, institute proactive enforcement, and provide the Employment Standards Branch with the resources needed to carry out its mandate effectively.” says Fairey.

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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