

BC Employment Standards Coalition

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 5, 2018

Immediate action needed to reform BC employment standards

Vancouver– September 5, 2018 – Urgent reforms are needed to BC employment standards, including regulations regarding myriad exclusions, particularly exclusions from hours of work and overtime and statutory holidays, the employment of children, protections for migrant workers, says the BC Employment Standards Coalition.

The Coalition has presented a comprehensive submission to BC’s Minister of Labour calling for reforms that are needed to address the neglect of workers’ rights by the previous Liberal government for 16 years, including a change in the way employment standards are enforced by the province’s Employment Standards Branch.

For the overwhelming majority of workers in British Columbia the only basic employment rights and protections they have are those guaranteed by the *Employment Standards Act*.

The most pressing need for employment standards change is in how the *Act* is enforced. The current enforcement system is worker complaint driven, whereas the consensus of recent independent reviews of employment standards in Ontario and BC is that the Employment Standards Branch should engage in pro-active investigation and enforcement, which would require a significant increase in Branch enforcement staff.

The BC Employment Standards Coalition is concerned that the Minister of Labour will not act on the pressing need for immediate employment standards changes until after he has received the final recommendations of the BC Law Institute’s review of the *Employment Standards Act*, which is not expected until the end of 2018.

The Coalition submission to the Minister makes reference to some of the 78 interim recommendations contained in the 450-page BC Law Institute’s preliminary report released in June. However, the Coalition has been critical of the way in which the BC Law Institute’s four-year review has been conducted, particularly the absence of public consultation and a public hearing process, and because the majority of its interim recommendations demonstrate a bias for employers.

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.

For interviews, please contact:

David Fairey, Co-Chair, BC Employment Standards Coalition
604-430-6036

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david@labourconsultingservices.com