



News Release

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SFL Reacts to Provincial Budget

The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, speaking on behalf of 95,000 members and their families, was pleased to hear that the Province of Saskatchewan was able to balance the 2009-2010 provincial budget. However the SFL has concerns over the fact that post secondary tuitions will probably rise; funding for Station 20 West in Saskatoon was not reinstated; the need for an improved childcare system seemed to be ignored, pockets of poverty remain; and the issue of affordable housing was not adequately addressed. The infrastructure announcements were appreciated as was the announcement of a new children's hospital in Saskatoon.

"Yes the budget is balanced, but we could have expanded and improved social programs had we a proper resource royalty structure in place over the past three decades", said SFL Treasurer Marvin Meickel, "our treasury would be much fuller today had we not let our resources be exploited with only modest royalty returns to our province".

The SFL is also concerned that although Saskatchewan has the second highest lost time injuries in Canada (much higher than the national injury rate) there was no provision in the budget for more occupational health and safety officers. "All this at a time when more and more people are joining the workforce", said Meickel.

"We are concerned that workers issues are not being addressed by the government and while the staff of the Labour Branch of the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour work hard, we don't feel the government is giving them enough support. Meickel stated "that Labour receives about twelve and a half million dollars out of a Ministry budget of eight hundred and forty million dollars. It doesn't seem we are a priority when it comes to improving conditions – we are only a priority when they want to limit our rights and freedoms".

The SFL represents over 95,000 unionized workers from 37 affiliated unions in Saskatchewan.

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