



News Release

For immediate release

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Priority must be placed on women's issues: SFL

The province's largest labour organization chose March 8 – International Women's Day – to call for action on a number of issues that are important to women in the paid work force.

The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour says governments, employers and the labour movement need to place a much higher emphasis on adopting and enacting the priorities of working women.

The Federation of Labour is very concerned about the recent announcement by Harper Federal government to back away from child care commitments and agreements made between the provinces and the federal government last year.

SFL President Larry Hubich, said that a properly funded universal child care plan is essential to ensuring equality for working women. A comprehensive national child care strategy must be more than giving parents an extra \$100.00 per month per child. It's about creating quality child care spaces in a publicly run system.

The Federation of Labour is also concerned that the government of Saskatchewan has not introduced legislation to specifically require equal pay for work of equal value in all sectors of the provincial economy.

SFL President Larry Hubich, said the Calvert government needs to follow the lead of eight other provinces and the federal government and pass a pay equity law to erode the thirty per cent wage gap resulting from gender-based discrimination.

Hubich also called for better enforcement of restraining orders on violent spouses, more emphasis on applying anti-stalking laws and stepped up pursuit of those people with unpaid maintenance orders.

He said government departments need to do a better job of acquainting working women with their legal right to a violence-free and harassment-free work environment.

The SFL is also calling for an immediate increase in the minimum wage to at least \$8.16 an hour to lift low income workers' earnings above the poverty line. This is consistent with the recent recommendations of the Commission on Improving Work Opportunities for Saskatchewan Residents. A large number of young women work at or near the minimum wage, and moving the minimum wage to a level above the poverty line is long overdue.

The origins of International Women's Day date back to March 8, 1857, when women employed in New York City's garment district walked off the job and staged a march to protest twelve hour days, poverty wages and unhealthy, unsafe working conditions.

For more information contact Larry Hubich – 537- 7330 (cell) in Regina.