

COALITION OF BC BUSINESSES

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Review Committee Report Opens Door to Balanced Labour Laws

Burnaby, B.C. – B.C.'s small and medium-sized business community says the report issued today by the Labour Relations Code Review Committee identifies roadblocks that the government must remove to restore balance and employee choice to the province's labour laws.

"The rights of small employers and their employees under the Labour Relations Code were systematically eroded through the 90's in B.C.," said Philip Hochstein, Chair of the Coalition of BC Businesses, adding that more work needs to be done to restore balance to the Code and ensure that our labour laws promote a strong economy.

"The small business community was disappointed with the Committee's conclusions on some issues and with the exclusion of other issues, such as replacement workers, from the Committee's mandate. But the report is a necessary step toward restoring the balance that will foster a healthy small business investment climate and job creation."

The key issues of concern for the small and medium-sized business community highlighted in the report are:

- Employees working for franchise or multi-location operations have great difficulty exercising their right to decertify, and are often forced to remain unionized when they no longer want union representation. (Partial Decertification)
- The rights and obligations of employers, employees, and unions are inconsistent with respect to certifications and decertifications (Unfair Labour Practices)
- Employees have no choice about unionization when a bankrupt business is resurrected, and the purchasers of bankrupt businesses are required to take the union certification and collective agreement. (Successorship after bankruptcy)

"The committee has done their part by exploring and reporting on many of the issues that frustrate the small business job creators of the province," said Hochstein. "Now it's time for government to step up to the plate and make the necessary legislative changes."

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