

NL Employers' Council pleased with yesterday's House of Commons defeat of Anti-replacement worker bill

Further evidence that this type of legislation is bad for labour relations

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October 21, 2010, St. John's, NL – Bill-386, a federal bill to ban replacement workers in the event of a labour dispute, was defeated in the House of Commons yesterday by a vote of 153 to 113. The NL Employers' Council (NLEC) has been lobbying the federal government through strong representation to provincial Members of Parliament to explain their concerns with this piece of legislation. The NLEC is pleased to see the defeat of this private members bill.

This is the 14th proposed motion or bill for anti-replacement worker legislation that the federal government has defeated since 2000. The NL Federation of Labour has said publicly that they will use the looming industrial inquiry into the Voisey's Bay strike as a platform to push for anti-replacement worker legislation in this province. The defeat of such legislation for the 14th time at a federal level further supports the NLEC's position that anti-replacement worker legislation is bad for the labour relations climate in this province.

"Labour is pushing for anti-replacement worker legislation because it shifts the balance of bargaining power in favour of the union, regardless of the consequences," says NLEC Executive Director, Richard Alexander. "The federal government is obviously aware that this sort of legislation is bad for labour relations in this country, and that the fundamental balance of power between the two parties is instrumental in maintaining a healthy labour relations climate. The defeat of yet another bill to ban replacement workers at a federal level should indicate to our provincial government that such legislation in this province would be extremely harmful."

Independent research on the impact of anti-replacement worker legislation shows conclusively that this legislation shifts the fundamental balance of bargaining power in favour of the union, resulting in an increase in duration and frequency of strikes. The NLEC has compiled and shared this research with government. They are hopeful that if an industrial inquiry does take place, and is used by labour to push this legislation, the provincial government will follow the example of this federal decision and recognize that this legislation is unfeasible.

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The NLEC is the lead advocacy organization on matters that affect the employment relationship in Newfoundland & Labrador.

For more information visit www.nlec.nf.ca.

Interview opportunities available.

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