



Tel: (709) 368-6532 Fax: (709) 368-6543

AMEC Building, 133 Crosbie Road, Suite 208 St. John's, NL A1B 1H3

E-mail: nlec@nlec.nf.ca www.nlec.nf.ca

Proposed Replacement Worker Bill Would Remove All Rights From Employers *--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

January 26th, 2007, St. John's, NL – Bill C-257, a troubling piece of **replacement worker legislation** currently being considered by the House of Commons, would strip employers of all rights during labour disputes, and place all the power squarely in the hands of unions, completely destroying the balance of power in negotiations. “This balance is the basic principle behind labour legislation”, concedes Marilyn Tucker, President of the lead business advocacy group in this province on matters involving labour relations.

Labour legislation recognizes the right of workers to withdraw their services during a labour dispute, and that right is balanced with the ability of the employer to continue to operate the business. Both parties achieve those goals with major inconvenience, difficulty, and expense. Workers are permitted to continue to receive income in the form of strike pay, and employers are permitted to continue to operate their business as best they can, using managers and supervisors. If this legislation passes, employers will no longer be able to operate their businesses using managers and supervisors, causing employers to shut down while workers continue to receive strike pay.

One only has to look as far as the transportation industry to understand what a detrimental effect this legislation would have. Consider a Newfoundland-based company that transports goods to and from other provinces. If such a company were involved in a labour dispute, the provision of goods to major companies on the mainland would come to a complete halt. How long would it take for competitors based on the mainland to take over their business, causing employers, employees, communities, the government, and the province to lose? Imagine again a telecommunications company during a strike. If such legislation passes, managers and supervisors would be unable to carry out repairs on telephone, television, cable, and Internet services, drastically affecting the provision of such major services. This alone could have serious ramifications for public safety.

Tucker does not dispute that labour legislation could stand some revision. However, these proposed bills go much too far, and if passed, would totally disrupt labour relations and business. The province's Conservative MP's have assured Tucker that their party does not support such legislation. However, with a minority government in Ottawa, and strong support by the NDP and Bloc Quebecois, this legislation stands a real threat of being passed.

Bill C-257 is slated for a series of committee discussion starting on January 30th. We are urging the members of the committee to carefully read and consider the impacts and vote against the Bill in its current form.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Council is the lead business advocacy group on labour and employment-related issues.

-30-

Media Contact: Nicole Scaplen, (709) 368-6573 (w), (709) 689-6989 (c) or
[**nscaplen@nlec.nf.ca**](mailto:nscaplen@nlec.nf.ca)