

**Reservist Legislation Unnecessary; Employers Already Committed to the Cause**

*--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

**March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008, St. John's, NL** – Yesterday, the provincial government introduced legislation designed to protect the jobs of military reservists called away from civilian work for military duty. The Newfoundland & Labrador Employers' Council contends that employers have been respecting the demands of military service for many years.

Under this amendment to the Labour Standards Act, military reservists would receive job-protected leave during a tour of duty or certain domestic operations such as natural disasters or search and rescue operations. Upon the reservists return from leave, the employer would be required to reinstate the reservist to the same position if it still exists, or to a comparable position if it does not.

The Newfoundland & Labrador Employers' Council contends that employers already recognize the importance of extending leaves of absences to personnel called to duty for the country. According to Richard Alexander, Executive Director of Council, "employers are already voluntarily protecting reservists' positions and will remain committed to doing so with or without legislation." In fact, the provincial branch of the Canadian Forces Liaison Council has received commitment in writing from over a hundred local employers to support reservists in the workforce.

Although providing job protection does cause some issues for employers such as filling positions with specialized skills sets, employers have signed on to the cause. "This legislation is providing legal protection for something that is already happening. Employers recognize the important job of reservists for Canada's military and would continue to support them in any way possible, without undue hardship to the organization or other employees", Alexander concluded.

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

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