

Sunshine List for TFW Program

What is the Alberta Federation of Labour calling for?

We're calling on the federal government to develop a searchable database of employers approved to hire workers through the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP). The database would include the name of the employer, the number of workers approved to be hired, the number of workers actually hired, workplace location, occupations and wages.

We're also calling on the government to publish a database of worksites where Temporary Foreign Workers are employed. Our third request is for a federal-provincial strategy on inspection and enforcement of worksites where TFWs are employed.

Why is a 'Sunshine List' for the Temporary Foreign Worker Program needed?

Behind every story of scandal with the Temporary Foreign Worker Program is a worker or group of workers who have lost their job or seen their hours or wages cut. The Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) receives dozens of calls from these same workers whenever we release information on this Program. This information is needed to hold employers who chose not to hire Canadians to account. It's also needed to highlight the flaws and loopholes that are integral to the design of the TFW Program.

How has transparency of the TFWP changed?

The TFWP has become less transparent. Information requests take longer and longer to fulfill with more and more records redacted where they haven't been redacted before.

The AFL has also caught wind of plans floated within government to allow employers to have their business name pre-censored from information requests.

Why is the government moving to less transparency in the TFW Program?

We asked federal government staff why they were redacting so much information where they hadn't done so in the past, and they told us that they'd received complaints from business that this information is publicly available from the *Access to Information (ATIP)* system. Instead of standing up for fairness and transparency when it comes to Canadians' jobs, the Harper government has caved to employer pressure and begun heavily censoring the files by excluding the names of employers.

Without the names of employers, a list of TFW approvals is practically useless. Without the names of employers, the potential for abuse of the system increases.

How much will this cost?

There would be no additional costs with a Sunshine List for the Temporary Foreign Worker Program. In fact, it may save the government resources.

As more and more employers access workers through the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, more and more complaints of abuse have surfaced. This has led to groups like the Alberta Federation of Labour to attempt to access information records through the *ATIP* system.

A Sunshine List would simply divert some of the resources normally going to ATIP requests to compiling the list itself. It may even save the government money because ATIP request processes are cumbersome and time-consuming. Many ATIP requests could be avoided if this sort of information was published proactively.

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