



# VANCOUVER and DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL



February 18, 2021

VIA Email: The Honourable Selina Robinson, MLA, Minister of Finance  
FIN.Minister@gov.bc.ca

The Honourable Adrian Dix, MLA, Minister of Health  
HLTH.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Ministers,

I am writing today on behalf of the Vancouver and District Labour Council, representing approximately 60,000 unionized workers and 75 affiliated union locals in the City of Vancouver and neighbouring municipalities.

At our February regular meeting, delegates to our Council adopted a motion in support of the Hospital Employees' Union's Make It Public campaign. As I'm sure you are aware, the campaign calls upon the BC government to get private companies out of hospitals and extended care homes and invest in public health care for everyone.

Our support for healthcare workers on this subject goes back to the beginning. When the BC Liberal government tore up contracts, slashed wages, and privatized services we spoke out and took action in opposition. Today we have seen some of the damage done by that government reversed thanks to the hard work of healthcare unions as well as the actions of your government. But there is still work to be done.

We all know that BC's healthcare workers have been among the most noted frontline heroes of the COVID-19 pandemic. They are working hard to provide good care to patients despite very difficult circumstances. Public appreciation for those employed in healthcare has reached new, and well deserved, heights as a result.

But it must be remembered that it is not only our hardworking doctors and nurses who make our public healthcare system function. It also includes cleaning and dietary staff who keep our hospitals clean and safe and prepare and deliver meals to patients.

Many of these workers are currently forced to work for private corporations which profit while keeping wages low and workloads high. The result of this is higher levels of staff turnover,

Pg. 2/...

workplace stress, and precarity. These workers are now making less today than they did 20 years ago, as a result of this calculated program of privatization. While for profit corporations' benefit, frontline workers and patients pay the price.

In the recent provincial election, the BC NDP committed to fixing this problem by bringing these workers back under the control of our public health authorities. That commitment no doubt helped to win the support of many healthcare workers, and others who care about workers' rights and about our public healthcare system. We join HEU in urging the implementation of that commitment as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

Yours Truly,



Stephen von Sychowski  
President

cc: VDLC Executive Board