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REPRESENTING THE
FOLLOWING
AFFILIATES:

BOILERMAKERS
Lodge 146

BRICKLAYERS
Local 1

BRICKLAYERS
Local 2

CARPENTERS
Local 1325

CARPENTERS
Local 2103

CONSTRUCTION &
GENERAL WORKERS
Local 92

CONSTRUCTION &
SPECIALIZED WORKERS
Local 1111

ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS
Local 122

ELEVATOR CONSTRUCTORS
Local 130

IBEW
Local 424

INSULATORS
Local 110

IRONWORKERS
Local 720

IRONWORKERS
Local 725

MILLWRIGHTS
Local 1460

OPERATING ENGINEERS
Local 955

PAINTERS & ALLIED TRADES
Local 177

PLASTERERS &
CEMENT MASONS
Local 222

SHEET METAL WORKERS
Local 8

TEAMSTERS
Local 362

UNITE HERE
CULINARY WORKERS
Local 47

UNITED ASSOCIATION OF
PLUMBERS & PIPEFITTERS
Local 488

UNITED ASSOCIATION OF
PLUMBERS & PIPEFITTERS
Local 496

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

DATE: March 13, 2014

LOCATION: Edmonton, Alberta

HEADLINE: The Building Trades of Alberta calls for more stringent oversight of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program

BODY TEXT:

The Building Trades of Alberta calls for more stringent oversight of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program

Recent abuses of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program have raised concerns among Albertans. The Building Trades of Alberta supports strict adherence to the rules of the Temporary Foreign Worker program as an essential plank in Alberta's economic growth – while insisting on the protection of Canadians' jobs.

We, together with our signatory contractors, fully support the principal that every available and qualified Canadian should be given the first opportunity and access to Canadian jobs before **any** consideration is given to access or procure foreign workers.

Secondly, we recognize that we must continue to work hard to bring young Canadians and under employed Canadians into the Building Trades, in order to grow and secure a local Canadian workforce of the future. We have a collective obligation as leaders of the unionized construction sector, to ensure there are ample apprenticeship opportunities available in the trades, for young Canadians and others such as Aboriginal Canadians, women and veterans. While some progress is being made on this longer term solution a more deliberate and intentional effort to create these opportunities must be demonstrated, by the owners and contractors that utilize the services of our tradespersons.

It's important to recognize, however, the economic effects of skilled trades' shortages in Alberta. That is why, over the last several years the BTA, our member unions and contractor/owner partners have used the TFW Program for acute periodic shortages in specific skilled trades. We have ensured strict adherence and compliance with all of the rules and protocols specified in the TFW Program Memorandum of Understanding. Specifically, that means ensuring effective methods are in place to advertise and promote Alberta job opportunities to all qualified Canadians. It also means ensuring all workers brought in through our programs are treated with the utmost dignity and respect and are compensated in accordance with the identical terms and conditions of the effective collective agreements received by our members.

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BODY TEXT CONTINUED:

More recent events in Alberta and other parts of Canada have highlighted and identified the misuse and abuse of the TFW Program by industries and parties not affiliated with Building Trades construction stakeholders. In these cases we are actively advocating to the appropriate government representatives, both federally and provincially, that the abusers are held accountable and dealt with accordingly.

We understand and recognize that these recent abuses have garnered the frustration and suspicion amongst the individual members of the Building Trades Unions to the point where some have chosen to take independent actions to protest their lack of faith in the system. While we are respectful of these views and opinions, we will continue to support the necessary and proper utilization of the TFW Program when appropriate. We will also continue our efforts to lobby the responsible government agencies and advocate for more stringent oversight and compliance with the objectives and intent of the TFW Program.

This statement has been prepared by the Building Trades of Alberta, on behalf of the Business Managers of the affiliated Building Trades Local Unions.

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