

Alberta Government Breaks Promises - And Laws - With Wage Freeze Legislation

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Body

The Alberta Federation of Labour issued the following news release:

The Redford wage freeze **breaks promises** and **breaks laws**.

The legislation, which the government tabled on Wednesday, will ignore the bargaining rights of hundreds of thousands of Albertans and impose a wage freeze. This is a government tactic that has been repeatedly struck down by the Supreme Court of Canada.

"Alison Redford was elected on a **promise** that she wouldn't attack public sector workers. She's **broken** that **promise** and almost every other election **promise** she made just 18 months ago," Alberta Federation of Labour president Gil McGowan said. "We will see her in court and we will see her at the ballot box."

Bills 45 and 46 will take away the right of unions to consult their own membership about possible labour action. Additionally, punitive measures can be taken against a whole union for the actions - or even words - of a single member.

The wage freeze will mean that workers wages will fall behind inflation. Over the course of three years, this will mean an effective drop in wages by about six per cent. The government of Alberta forecasts the province's real GDP to expand by 3.3 per cent this year and 3.5% next year. If the economy is growing, we should be able to treat public-sector workers fairly.

Repeatedly over the past decade, the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that Workers have a constitutional right to make collective representations and to have their collective representations considered in good faith.

"We are simply asking the government to not **break the law**," McGowan said. "It's one thing for governments to obtain a wage freeze through negotiations with unions and workers, it's another thing to impose those freezes without negotiation. Such legislation is unfair, unnecessarily provocative and almost certainly unconstitutional."

The government has suggested that the wage freeze is being imposed because of the cost of the devastating floods in Calgary and High River last spring and summer.

"They're paying for the flood damage on the backs of the people who cleaned up the mess," McGowan said. "We lauded these people as heroes just a few weeks ago. And now, Alison Redford is picking their pockets."

For more information on these bills and on collective bargaining download the AFL factsheets:

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- 1) **Breaking a promise** and the **law** - rollbacks http://www.afl.org/index.php/Download-document/952-2013-Fact-Sheet-1_Breaking-a-Promise-and-the-Law_Rollbacks.html
- 2) **Breaking a promise** and **breaking the law** supreme court <http://www.afl.org/index.php/Reports/2013-fact-sheet-2breaking-a-promise-and-breaking-the-law-supreme-court2013.html>
- 3) Alberta economy booming <http://www.afl.org/index.php/Reports/2013-fact-sheet-3alberta-economy-booming.html>
- 4) **Breaking a promise** and **breaking the law** - public sector wages http://www.afl.org/index.php/Download-document/950-2013-Fact-Sheet-4_Breaking-a-Promise-and-Breaking-the-Law-Public-Sector-Wages.html
- 5) **Breaking a promise** and the **law** - public service stretched <http://www.afl.org/index.php/Reports/2013-fact-sheet-5breaking-a-promise-and-the-lawpublic-service-stretched.html>
- 6) Alberta has a revenue problem <http://www.afl.org/index.php/Reports/2013-fact-sheet-6alberta-has-a-revenue-problem.html>

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