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April 17, 2004

WCA LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE
P.O. Box 1770
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RE: MFL Brief to WCB.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have recently been reviewing your website regarding the "Public Hearings Regarding the Workers Compensation Act". While I find some of the submissions from the general public amusing, I have read from the Manitoba Federation of Labour (MFL) "Brief" and have gone no further than the first couple of pages to find a statement in the article that made me doubt the intent of the brief. I do respect Mr.X's right to (an) opinion. I also expect a person in his position representing the organized work force in this province to relay facts in his statements under the federation's banner and to limit his personal opinion to other forms of correspondence. The MFL is an integral part of our work force and he is doing it no justice to be taken seriously by submitting this brief.

On page two he states,

"There have been instances where workers have had their income significantly reduced because of circumstances within the legislation that are unfair and others who will not have enough income to justify staying off work to heal."

It is my understanding that workers are compensated 90% of their net income which is non-taxable. I find it hard for this to be considered "significant". He must be mistaken with the Employment Insurance Act which is on average 65% of income. While a 10% reduction may stress

certain families I do not think this is enough of a reduction to force people back to work in an injured state. WCB is insurance and the federation fights hard for its members to receive benefits from employer-funded private under-writers who provide only 67% of income coverage for short term and long term disability. You would think they would consider WCB's 90% coverage as a goal and not a point of indifference.

After reading the entire brief I have come to the conclusion that Mr. X is not going to the source of his members' issues in the workforce. He is merely using the WCB as a scapegoat or "last chance" for justice from employers who may be somewhat suspect of providing an acceptable workplace for today's worker.

I also respect the WCB to ask for opinion so it may improve its service, rate structure and overall general operation, but I find Mr.X's brief to provide no value to these endeavours.

He is using this opportunity for no other reason as to grand stand and have the MFL demonstrate to its members that it is providing a valuable service for the dues they pay. I wonder if Mr.X also brings these concerns up with *insurance companies* as to the coverage they provide. This is a cost to employers who are respectable enough to offer insurance benefits to their MFL members.

The WCB is an act of legislation and Mr. X as a citizen of this province definitely has a right to opinion but maybe he should concentrate his MFL efforts towards the employers who provide no "third party" benefits to his members. The WCB is an easy target because it is a "third arm" of the government but let's not be shooting fish in a barrel. I suspect his members deserve more for the dues they pay.

While I understand his argument I think it is somewhat misdirected.

Sincerely,

Winnipeg