

Too Hot to Work Campaign - Organizational/Union Letter Template

[LETTERHEAD]

[DATE]

The Hon. David Eby, M.L.A
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Hon. Harry Baines
Minister of Labour
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Hon. Adrian Dix
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CC: Worker Solidarity Network - ismail@workersolidarity.ca

SUBJECT LINE: We support Too Hot to Work Protections

BODY:

Dear Premier David Eby, Ministers Harry Baines and Adrian Dix,

[You can use the following bullet points to build your individualized letters. Please make your letter as distinct as possible, but retain the key points about your influence, the context, the problem and what we want.]

- **Introduce your union/organization:**
 - stress membership, media reach & anything else indicating that you can and will influence government decision-makers, media opinion and voters.

- **Stress timeliness and summarize consequences:**
 - Stress the rise of climate disasters; call awareness to extreme heat, wildfires, heat domes, and the consequences. *What is the context of the need for Too hot to Work Protections?*
 - Stress urgency - the climate crisis is only going to intensify, and labour law is not keeping up with the reality of working during increasing climate disasters. *What is the current gap in legislation and law?*
 - Stress the need: workers are being impacted right NOW. Be sure to stress the impact on the health and wellbeing of workers. *What are the consequences of this gap?*
 - Economic impact: you may also stress the increasing negative impact on the economy climate disasters and a workforce unable to keep up with the climate crisis will have
 - The climate crisis is only going to continue getting worse
 - Without Too Hot to Work protections, thousands of workers will have their health and wellbeing adversely affected and be pushed into increasing precarity
 - The BC NDP would risk being remembered as not having been proactive in the face of the climate crisis, or not meaningfully addressing the needs of workers

- **Include the the key demand: The key demand is an immediate implementation of a Too Hot to Work protections, which would include:**
 - Ensure vulnerable, at-risk communities; including migrant workers and workers with disabilities are adequately protected during extreme heat
 - Implement health and safety procedures including access to hydration, shade and cooling during above average heat temperatures
 - Additional breaks for redress during extreme heat and heat domes, particularly for at-risk workers including outdoor workers, workers engaged in strenuous work, workers on 12 hour shifts, and workers required to wear heavy clothing or gear
 - Access to PPE and thermometers to assist workers ins staying safe and assessing heat conditions at worksites

- A robust enforcement policy, including enforcement of heat assessment practices
- The conduction of 1000 workplace inspections relating to heat exposure, with a focus on complaints that came in during the 2021 heat dome
- **Share what your own union or workplace is doing:**
 - If you are a member of a union working to introduce Too Hot to Work policies at convention/via collective bargaining, or health and safety committees, feel free to also highlight what your union is working on as precedent currently being set in the province
 - If you do this, please highlight the importance of having similar protections for the thousands of non-unionized workers in the province. “While our union will protect hundreds of workers, there still remains thousands of predominantly precarious and marginalized workers in the province who will remain left out without government intervention”
- **Why this matters to you**
 - Your union/organization will have a unique positionality, and unique reasons as to why this matters to you. The following points may help you argue your position; but not all may be relevant, or you may have other salient points.
 - *Lifting up the most marginalized and precarious workers lifts up all workers:*
 - With Too Hot to Work protections implemented via legislation for the most precarious of workers, the government can ensure no worker is left behind. While now unions have to fight on a local-by-local basis to implement their own Too Hot to Work protections, Too Hot to Work legislation will ensure all unionized workers are also protected and build union capacity.
 - Workers assisted by advocacy organizations tend to be at the intersection of multiple crises/traumas. Ensuring that these workers are protected in one area of their life, helps support organizations in addressing needs in other spheres
 - *Helping the most precarious workers strengthens the union movement:* with workers not facing the increased precarity and burden of working under the climate crisis with no protections, it creates space and capacity for more workers to feel safe enough to work towards unionization. You may wish to stress the historic connection between

the BCNDP and unions, and how more unionized workers strengthens the BCNDP base

- *It's about equality and justice and leaving no one behind:*
 - the most affected workers are predominantly racialized, gendered, migrant workers - workers already facing injustice, discrimination and inequity. Too Hot to Work protections are about supporting historically marginalized groups and ensuring they are supported, protected, and able to maintain a decent quality of living.
 - Too Hot to Work protections are not just about climate or labour justice but also disability justice, justice for marginalized genders, justice for racialized groups - these are all groups overwhelmingly impacted by extreme heat
- *It's about being proactive in the face of climate change:*
 - the climate crisis is already here. While reducing emissions and transitioning to a green and just economy are important focuses, the reality is we also need to have protections for people and workers NOW as the consequences of climate change are no longer a future possibility but a daily occurrence
 - As the climate crisis intensifies and has increasingly dire ramifications, being proactive about implementing protection now would ensure that we are ready for further down the line, and workers are protected as disasters intensify
- *It's about ensuring workers in BC remain healthy:*
 - Extreme heat poses a real threat to the health of workers and people in BC, and we have already seen people be impacted and even die in past heat domes
- *It's about ensuring the economy of BC remains healthy:*
 - If workers are unable to work in a safe environment, with the protections they need, and even regular jobs pose health threats to workers, this risks eventually driving the economy to a standstill
 - We need a healthy workforce, we need worker wages and shifts protected, to ensure the economy continues to function
 - The lack of climate protections and government support may also cause strain to smaller businesses who will have to individually bear the brunt of figuring out workplace responses. Clear legislation will help in creating government

programming to support businesses in implementing Too Hot to Work protections

- **Encourage the BC NDP to do the right thing:**
 - The BC NDP positions itself as both the working class party and a climate leader; with ties to unions and workers as well as various types of advocacy groups.
 - Validate the BC NDP's historic connection to unions and workers
 - Encourage the BC NDP to do the right thing to its core constituency
 - Emphasize that only the BC NDP is positioned to act to protect workers in the province in a meaningful way, with Too Hot to Work protections
 - The BC NDP can set precedence for the whole country, and be remembered as a proactive party that addressed the needs of workers in the face of an intensifying climate crisis