

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **B.C. businesses can't afford TFW program changes**

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#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Vancouver, May 1, 2013** – The BC Chamber of Commerce is very concerned about just-announced changes to the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) program, including new fees for businesses and measures that will cause hiring delays and make the program unusable for many small businesses.

“These changes will hit many B.C. businesses hard – especially small businesses,” said John Winter, the BC Chamber’s president and CEO.

B.C. businesses spanning from highly skilled workers in construction and the digital industries through to BC’s tourism and hospitality industries rely heavily on the TFW program to hire skillsets that aren’t available locally.

Winter said the BC Chamber supports efforts to help Canadians fill Canadian jobs. He added that the BC Chamber recognizes that there are concerns with a few unscrupulous employers.

But he said the proposed changes to the TFW program will have serious fallout.

“Many of the small B.C. businesses that rely on this program don’t have the deep pockets to weather new costs and can’t afford to have empty positions with no workers available to fill them,” he said. “These changes aren’t just hasty: they’re dangerous.”

Winter said the changes in no way reflect the information and advice that the BC Chamber provided to the federal government when recently consulted on the TFW program.

“The federal government asked us for our view on this program, but has ignored it completely,” Winter said. “This is a serious overreaction on the government’s part; the program worked.”

The BC Chamber is calling on the federal government to halt its just-announced changes to the program and launch a more substantive review of the program that calls for – and listens to – more input from industry.



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*The BC Chamber is the largest and most broadly-based business organization in the province. Representing over 120 Chambers of Commerce and 32,000 businesses of every size, sector and region of the province, the BC Chamber of Commerce is “The Voice of Business in BC.”*

- 30

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