



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

SUN responds to Saskatchewan labour law consultation

(Regina) July 31, 2012: The Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (SUN) submitted its official response to the province's labour consultation today in Regina. The omnibus review of 15 separate pieces of legislation governing labour laws in the province was announced by the Government of Saskatchewan in May of this year with a July 31, 2012 deadline set for all stakeholder and public input.

"A review of the legislation is not what is of concern to SUN - we support and encourage a process that is fully inclusive, backed by research and evidence and provides adequate timelines for informed, meaningful and collaborative discussion," states SUN President, Rosalee Longmoore. "Unfortunately, we believe this has not been appropriately provided for in this case and we have grave concerns about the potential negative impacts on our members and all working residents of this province."

Addressing the connection between poor employment conditions and poor health is the purpose of many pieces of legislation being reviewed as a part of this consultation. The *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, the *Labour Standards Act* and the *Trade Union Act* are intended to foster healthy, safe and well regulated work environments for all working people, whether unionized or not. Increased job strain due to a combination of demanding employment and low income, as well as other workplace stresses have been linked to increased workers compensation related injuries and medical ailments such as high blood pressure, heart disease, mental health disorders such as depression and high risk lifestyle choices such as smoking and alcohol consumption.

"We need to examine the full picture to truly understand the implications of the proposed changes; most notably, how they will affect the underlying health of our society," continues Longmoore. "As registered nurses and frontline health care providers, our members have a unique insight into the social determinants of health and their relationship to safe, well regulated workplaces and we strongly believe this needs to be a key focus of any labour legislation review."

SUN represents almost 9,000 Registered Nurses (RNs), Registered Psychiatric Nurses (RPNs), Registered Nurse(Nurse Practitioner)s (RN(NP)s) and graduates in the province.

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Contact:

Lars Murrin, Public Relations Officer

Office: 306-566-5582

Cell: 306-526-9175

Lars.murrin@sun-nurses.sk.ca