



November 15, 2018

## To All IBEW First District Local Unions

Greetings:

In the lead up to the 2015 federal election, the IBEW had worked with both the NDP and Liberal parties to advocate for certain items to be included in their election platform, one of those items was to restore a Federal Fair Wages Act. Following the success of the Liberal Party in the 2015 Federal election, the Prime Minister issued mandate letters to each Minister. The Minister of Employment, Workforce Development, and Labour has completed 4 out of 5 asks that the IBEW and the labour movement advocated for, the only issue not yet accomplished is restoring the Federal Fair Wages legislation that was axed by the Harper Conservatives for their friends at the Merit Shop; a small but powerful group of anti-union contractors.

The Government of Canada's [Labour Program](#) would like your opinion on what a modern fair wages policy should look like – please complete their [online survey](#) by **Friday December 7, 2018** to have your say.

A fair wages policy typically requires that contractors pay their employees at least the prevailing wage for their occupation in a given region. The goal of such a policy is to prevent suppliers from competing for government contracts on the basis of substandard wages. This legislation would help even the playing field for our union contractors bidding against unscrupulous open shop contractors who pay their employees the bare minimum.

Until 2014, the federal government had a fair wages policy under the [Fair Wages and Hours of Labour Act](#), which covered contractors and subcontractors in the construction, remodeling, repair or demolition industries. With close to \$25 billion in spending every year, the Government of Canada is looking to leverage its procurement contracts to help improve the lives of Canadians.

The federal government is seeking the views of Canadians in three different areas:

- Who should be covered by this policy?
- What should the policy require?
- How should this policy be enforced?

By completing the federal governments [online survey](#) by **December 7, 2018**, the IBEW will help the federal government gain a better understanding of how best to move forward with a new policy.

I encourage you to share this survey widely with our members, our local and Provincial Building Trade affiliates, our contractors and their associations.



Please find attached a document created capturing screen shots of the survey to help you prepare your answers before logging on to the complete the survey.

Should you have any questions, please direct them to your IBEW International Service Representative or to the folks at ESDC at the following email address:

[EDSC.SalairesJustes-FairWages.ESDC@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca](mailto:EDSC.SalairesJustes-FairWages.ESDC@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca)

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Reid".

Tom Reid  
International Vice President

TR/ln

Encl.

cc: First District International Representatives  
IBEW, Construction Council of Ontario  
IBEW, System Council #11

# FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

## ON A MODERN FAIR WAGES POLICY (2018)

The following questions below are screen shots from the link provided in the email by the Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) Ministry within the Government of Canada. This document is only to assist our IBEW members in preparing to answer the survey questions provided by ESDC on how to best Modernize the Federal Fair Wages Policy.

*\*It should be noted that any answers found in the examples below either by a bullet being selected or text in a comment box was only to provide a sample for this document and in no way is intended to substitute for your answers.*

### Question 1



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### Consultation on a Modern Fair Wages Policy

\* Please indicate your group:

- Supplier
- Union
- Expert (non-governmental organization, academic, etc.)
- Individual

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Date modified: 2018-11-08

### Questions 2 & 3



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### Consultation on a Modern Fair Wages Policy

Background Information

What is your view on the use of fair wages policies (a policy that specified a minimal threshold of wages for employees in an industry)?

Favourable

1990 / 2000

What is your area(s) of expertise?

Labour law and policy

1979 / 2000

## Questions 4 & 5

Where are you active?

Province(s):

- Alberta
- British Columbia
- Manitoba
- New Brunswick
- Newfoundland and Labrador
- Northwest Territories
- Nova Scotia
- Nunavut
- Ontario
- Prince Edward Island
- Quebec
- Saskatchewan
- Yukon

City (or cities):

Toronto

493 / 500

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## Questions 6 & 7

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### Consultation on a Modern Fair Wages Policy

Scope of the policy

What impact could a fair wages policy (a policy that specified a minimal threshold of wages for employees in an industry) have on specific industries? Explain.

2000 / 2000

To which firms should a fair wages policy apply?

- Industries with low wages
- All firms
- Specific industries
- Other

Please explain:

2000 / 2000

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## Questions 8-10



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### Consultation on a Modern Fair Wages Policy

Requirements

Apart from the minimum wage, what regulations or laws exist that set the rates of employees?

Note recent changes in Ontario (e.g., Bill 148, being repealed).

1935 / 2000

Is subcontracting (e.g. the act of contracting out a portion of your contract to another firm) a common practice in your industry? Please explain.

2000 / 2000

Is using temporary help agencies a common practice in some industries? Which ones? Please explain.

2000 / 2000

Are there any specific problems a fair wages policy could address? (Select all that apply)

- Shortage of skilled workers

## Questions 11-13

Is using temporary help agencies a common practice in some industries? Which ones? Please explain.

2000 / 2000

Are there any specific problems a fair wages policy could address? (Select all that apply)

- Shortage of skilled workers
- Occupational Health and Safety issues and labour standards violations
- Diversity and inclusion
- Other

Please explain:

1999 / 2000

How would a policy setting prevailing wage affect employees?

2000 / 2000

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## Questions 14 & 15



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### Consultation on a Modern Fair Wages Policy

#### Compliance and enforcement

How should the Government of Canada enforce a fair wages policy? (Select all that apply)

- By requiring firms to submit a report
- By conducting audits of financial records
- By conducting inspections on site
- Other
- I don't know

Please explain:

2000 / 2000

If employers breach a fair wages policy by not paying the appropriate rate of pay to their employee, is it reasonable for them to:

- Be required to pay the employee the difference
- Lose a procurement contract
- Be excluded from the procurement contracts for a length of time
- Receive a fine
- Other

Please explain:

2000 / 2000

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**Questions 16 – 17**

**Consultation on a Modern Fair Wages Policy**

If you have any other comments on fair wages, please provide them here.

2000 / 2000

If you would like to submit a document, send it to [✉ EDSC.SalairesJustes-FairWages.ESDC@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca](mailto:EDSC.SalairesJustes-FairWages.ESDC@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca).

\* The Government of Canada may conduct follow-up discussions. Would you be interested in participating?

- Yes
- No

\* Name:

Organization:

Job title:

\* Email:

Phone number: (Digits only, no dashes, dots or spaces)

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