



# VANCOUVER and DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL



June 3, 2021

Mayor Kennedy Stewart and Vancouver City Council  
VIA Email

Dear Mayor and Council,

RE: Endorsing the Vote16BC Campaign to Lower the Voting Age to 16 across British Columbia – and – Supporting Hotel Workers' Rights to Return to Their Jobs at Living Wages

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I write on behalf of the Vancouver and District Labour Council with regards to two of the motions you have before you at your June 8 meeting.

The first of these is B.4 Endorsing the Vote16BC Campaign to Lower the Voting Age to 16 across British Columbia, submitted by Councillor Boyle.

Our Labour Council proudly endorsed this campaign back in May of 2020. We also submitted a motion endorsing the campaign to the BC Federation of Labour Convention in November of last year. This motion was adopted by convention delegates, thereby establishing it as Federation policy. It has also been endorsed by several of our affiliates, and sibling Labour Council's. In addition to this, the Union of BC Municipalities, BC School Board Trustees, and a number of political parties have endorsed the campaign.

Many young people are politically active and well informed. They are involved in the climate action movement, movements for equity and social justice, student unions, and more. Many work and pay taxes. They can drive and even join the military, with parental consent. Young people themselves are leading the movement to reduce the voting age and have collected thousands of petitions and secured the support of many organizations to that end.

Councillor Boyle's motion makes many additional strong arguments for supporting the Vote16BC campaign, which need not be reproduced in full here. Suffice to say that in our view expanding voting rights to youth sixteen years of age and older is a reform that is long overdue. We strongly encourage your support.

I also wish to convey our strong support for Councillor Swanson's motion B.5 Supporting Hotel Workers' Right to Return to Their Jobs at Living Wages.

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To: Mayor Kennedy Stewart and Vancouver City Council  
Re: Endorsing the Vote16BC and Supporting Hotel Workers' Right to Return to Their  
Jobs at Living Wages

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This motion addresses a profoundly unjust and contemptable situation which has been created by particularly bad players in the hospitality industry. Around 50,000 hotel workers were laid off across BC in March of 2020, with the majority being women and/or workers of colour.

Now many of these workers have been terminated, or may yet face termination, for no other reason than that their employer refuses to extend their recall period and instead is seeking to cut costs at the expense of their employees.

We believe that no worker should lose their job because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As the hospitality industry recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, workers should have the right to return to their jobs. Our affiliate UNITE HERE! Local 40 has launched the BC Unequal Women campaign and is drawing public attention to the way that the pandemic combined with unfair employers is leading to devastating impacts for racialized women workers, many of whom are long-term staff in hotels.

We hope that you will pass this motion and take all actions possible to help support these hospitality workers, who are valuable members of our communities and only want to return to their jobs with fairness and respect.

Thank you for your time. All the best in your deliberations on these and other important topics.

Yours Truly,



Stephen von Sychowski  
President, VDLC

cc: VDLC Executive Board  
Zailda Chan, President UNITE HERE! Local 40

svs/eb

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