



HSA calls on government to change approach to health care bargaining

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The Health Sciences Association, the union representing 12,000 health science professionals who provide the diagnostic, clinical and rehabilitation services in the public health care system, welcomed the deal hammered out over the weekend to force the government to step back from its attack on health support workers.

"It has been a very tense weekend as British Columbians' support for health support workers and anger at the Liberal government continued to grow in leaps and bounds," HSA President Cindy Stewart said.

"While I saw Ministry of Labour officials working hard to reach an agreement at the 11th hour this weekend, I have grave concerns about the trend in collective bargaining in the health sector when government refuses to set a respectful tone at the bargaining table.

"Government has no choice but to see this week's events as a clear signal that the way to avoid chaos is meaningful negotiations from the start," Stewart said.

"Our members went through this with the Liberal government in 2001. While that back-to-work legislation and imposed contract did not impose dramatic wage rollbacks and a retroactive clawback of hard-earned wages, the government's complete disregard for collective agreement and fair bargaining incensed our members, who staged a two-day illegal strike," she said.

"The International Labour Organization found the Campbell government violated international labour laws back in 2001. At the time, the government scoffed at the ILO ruling, and last week they made it clear they have no regard for international laws. They need to rethink their approach to collective bargaining in the health sector," she said.

The Health Sciences Association is the major union in the Paramedical Professional Bargaining Association currently in bargaining with the Hospital Employers Association of BC. The contract expired March 31.

[Read details of the agreement between health care support workers and the government](#) (PDF file)

[Link to Bill 37 \(on the BC Legislative Assembly web site\)](#)

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