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News release

November 25, 2002

Bill 37 introduced to make workplaces safer

Edmonton... Legislation to help make Alberta workplaces safer through increased fines and public awareness has been introduced in the Alberta Legislature.

"Keeping Alberta workers safe is a responsibility shared by employers, labour, safety associations, government and workers themselves," said the sponsor of the Bill, Drayton Valley-Calmor MLA Tony Abbott. "Bill 37 represents an important step in government's plan to reduce workplace injuries by 40% over the next two years."

Bill 37 proposes five major amendments to the *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act*:

- Increasing the maximum fine for an OHS offence from \$150,000 to \$500,000.
- Introducing penalties other than fines or incarceration for OHS offences, such as providing safety programs or education programs.
- Streamlining the process for updating OHS rules by allowing the creation of an Occupational Health and Safety Code to govern the codes of practice for worksite safety.
- Allowing the use of administrative fines similar to those used for traffic violations. The introduction of these fines will depend upon a review of these fines in other jurisdictions to determine their effectiveness.
- Publishing the names of employers with the best and worst safety performance in the province.

"These amendments strengthen the government's regulatory and enforcement efforts and set the stage for implementation of the Workplace Safety 2.0 strategy," added Alberta Human Resources and Employment Minister Clint Dunford. "Reaching our goal will mean 15,000 fewer injured workers each year. I would like to thank all of our partners who have joined us in making a commitment to keep our workers safe."

A copy of Bill 37 is available on the Internet at www.assembly.ab.ca

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