



# International Union Of Operating Engineers

AFFILIATED WITH THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Operating Engineers Welcome Legislation to Prohibit “Scabs”**

**OTTAWA** — *The following statement was issued by James T. Callahan, General President of the International Union of Operating Engineers, in support of legislation to prohibit replacement workers during a strike:*

The International Union of Operating Engineers welcomes the introduction of Bill C-58 by Minister of Labour Seamus O'Regan. The legislation will ensure workers' rights are protected within federally regulated workplaces. It restores fairness to the collective bargaining process. We call upon all parliamentarians to quickly pass and bring to enforcement this important piece of legislation.

“The existing law on replacement workers is inadequate and has failed to protect unionized workers. It has allowed the use of replacement workers in the federally regulated workplaces with impunity,” said James T. Callahan, General President of the International Union of Operating Engineers. “Allowing employers to bring replacement labour into the workplace during a dispute undermines the collective bargaining process and workers' rights. Replacement workers have no place where a certification exists between an employer and a union.”

In the past, the use of scab workers has undermined the fair and transparent collective bargaining process by tipping the balance of power to the employer. This leads to longer and more contentious work disruptions. Bill C-58 will ensure the parties rely on the bargaining process to arrive at a collective agreement. It will encourage employers to stay focused on reaching a deal at the bargaining table. Canada's unions have long called for robust, enforceable legislation, which should close any existing loopholes and leave no room for interpretation by employers. Such legislation already exists in British Columbia and Quebec, and is long overdue at the federal level.

General President Callahan called for swift passage, saying “Now is the time to level the playing field and enact C-58. We appreciate Minister O'Regan's leadership in introducing the legislation. We call on all parliamentarians to quickly pass it.”

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### **About the International Union of Operating Engineers**

*The International Union of Operating Engineers is a progressive and diversified trade union representing workers in a wide variety of occupational categories. Made up of 17 Local Unions across Canada, our 55,000 members have helped build Canada's infrastructure and have been involved in the production of Canada's resources and delivery of its critical health care and community services since 1896. Our members construct and shape the skylines of Canada—we are the specialists that build roads, schools, hospitals, pipelines, nuclear power, solar and wind farms, and more.*