



**INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS  
FRATERNITÉ INTERNATIONALE DES OUVRIERS EN ÉLECTRICITÉ**



EDWIN D. HILL  
International President  
Président international



**BILL DANIELS**

International Vice President / Vice-président international  
First District, CANADA / Premier District, CANADA



SALVATORE (SAM) J. CHILIA  
International Secretary/Treasurer  
Secrétaire-trésorier international



December 2, 2013

**TO ALL FIRST DISTRICT LOCAL UNIONS**

RE: Omnibus Budget Bill C-4 – Changes to the Canada Labour Code

Greetings:

The Conservative federal government has tabled part two of their 2013 omnibus budget implementation Bill C-4 which includes proposed changes to federal labour legislation. There are several changes that have been proposed including changes that could put workers lives at risk! Here are just some regressive changes being recommended in this budget bill;

- The Bill changes the definition of “danger” to “imminent or serious threat to the life or health of a person”.
- All authority and powers of Health and Safety Officers are now being removed and placed with the Minister, these Officers will be replaced with appointees whom the Minister deems as qualified.
- The Minister of Labour may administer or enforce electronically the Canada Labour Code, allowing for a “virtual” investigation by the Minister.

The IBEW represents over 6500 members that currently work under federal jurisdiction, who if this Bill passes will lose their right to refuse unsafe work and will be subject to the above mentioned regressive labour law changes.

The Conservative federal government is once again attempting to bring these changes in through the backdoor by incorporating it with their omnibus budget implementation bill, as they did in 2012, which saw the removal of the “*Federal Fair Wage and Hours of Labour Act*” and not once did they consult with labour on these changes.

I encourage you to inform our members of these pending changes and review the attached information that was sent by the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). I would also encourage you to contact your MP and tell them why they need to remove this from the budget bill, the CLC attachment provides a link and pre-drafted letter that can be used by our members, our families, and all Canadians. Putting workers lives at risk is not the answer that anyone should be proposing in any type of legislation.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

In solidarity,

Bill Daniels  
International Vice President

BD/mw

cc: First District Representatives  
System Council #11  
CCO  
NPAC



## Changes to the Canadian Labour Code

The lives of almost one million Canadian workers will be placed in danger as a result of cynical amendments that the Conservative government is making to the Canada Labour Code. Buried deep in the government's latest budget bill tabled on October 22 are amendments to the health and safety provisions of the Code that have nothing to do with balancing the budget, and everything to do with putting workers' lives at risk.

The government wants to water down the right to refuse dangerous work, end the role of federal Health and Safety Officers in the investigation process and give employers the power to discipline workers when they invoke the right to refuse dangerous work. All together, these changes would make the Canada Labour Code provisions on the right to refuse dangerous work the weakest in the country, and put workers' lives at risk. These proposals have no business being put in a budget bill.



Recently, some of you answered the call to action by sending an email to your MP and Ministers Leitch and Kellie, thank you. Help us to put a stop to these proposed dangerous changes by [sending this action](#) to a friend.

We've also made an [educational video](#) to share that explains the changes simply and effectively, you can see this on [youtube](#) and share it with as many people as you can.

## Thank you!

Thanks to you and thousands of outraged Canadians who have responded to our call for action, Members of Parliament have been flooded with emails urging them to remove changes to the health and safety provisions of the Canada Labour Code from the budget implementation bill.

The Conservative government has have responded with predictable talking points about reducing inefficiencies, claiming more than 80% of dangerous work refusals were found to be situations with no danger. But these statistics are based on a faulty internal department audit that did not examine all aspects of a health and safety officer's investigation.

While inspectors might not find the conditions support a refusal to do dangerous work, they often find violations of health and safety regulations in those cases and issue orders for companies to comply. In that way, inspectors play a vital roll in preventing unsafe conditions from happening.

Even if you can accept the government's thinking, under the existing law, 20% - one in five - dangerous work refusals were valid. Yet this government wants to water down that right and change the definition of danger -- including eliminating the right to refuse dangerous work that could result in chronic illness (like asbestos exposure) or damage the reproductive system (like exposure to cancer-causing chemicals).



Help us keep up the pressure -- [forward this to your friends](#) and family and ask them to send an email to their MP. Their letter will also be sent to every Conservative MP.

If you have received an answer to your email from a Conservative MP, we have drafted a [suitable response for you to send as well, you can find that here.](#)

Click [here to see our short educational video](#) on the changes and how they'll affect the one million Canadians who are federal workers.



Canadian Labour Congress  
2841 Riverside Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario K1V 8X7

[Privacy Policy](#)  
[Unsubscribe](#)

