



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

BACKGROUND

Government should respond to Supreme Court decision on *Bill 29* with a change of attitude – poll

Highlights:

- 80 per cent favour moratorium on health care layoffs post-*Bill 29* decision.
- 79 per cent say *Bill 29* worsened patient care or made no difference at all.
- 91 per cent say government should disclose the details and costs of contracts signed with foreign corporations as a result of *Bill 29*.

The Viewpoints Research/HEU poll surveyed 350 adult British Columbians on June 13 and 14. It is considered accurate to within 5.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Detailed Questions:

The law struck down by the Supreme Court resulted in 8,000 health care workers losing their jobs over the past five years. Now there are plans to lay off 1,100 more workers.

Health care unions say that these additional workers should not be laid off because the law allowing the layoffs has been struck down by the Supreme Court. The provincial government says that they have a year to comply with the Supreme Court's ruling and therefore the additional layoffs will go ahead as planned.

Do you agree or disagree that health care workers should continue to be laid off over the next year?

Strongly agree – 4.6% *Strongly disagree* – 60.6% *Don't Know/Refused* – 9.1%
Somewhat agree – 6.6% *Somewhat disagree* – 19.1%
Total agree – 11.2% **Total Disagree** – 79.7%

The government says it originally laid off these health care workers so more money could be spent on patient care. **Do you believe that patient care has improved, stayed about the same or worsened as a result of the layoff of these health care workers?**

Improved a lot – 1.4% *Worsened a lot* – 36.0% *Stayed about the same* – 22.9%
Improved somewhat – 4.0% *Worsened somewhat* – 19.7% *Don't Know/Refused* – 16.0%
Total worsened or no change – 78.6%

When the government laid off thousands of health care workers, they contracted-out these jobs to large, foreign corporations. **In light of the Supreme Court decision the government should make the details and costs of these contracts public.**

Strongly agree – 54.0% *Strongly disagree* – 0.3% *Don't Know/Refused* – 4.3%
Agree – 36.6% *Disagree* – 4.9%
Total agree – 90.6% **Total Disagree** – 5.2%

June 21, 2007

