



February 9, 2012

WorkSafeBC Board of Directors
6951 Westminster Highway
Richmond, BC V7C 1C6

Re: Changes to the Regulation protecting late night retail workers

Dear Sirs and Madam:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Telecommunications Workers Union National Health and Safety Committee, representing about 4,500 workers in British Columbia. We feel that WorkSafeBC made positive, progressive steps after the tragic death of Grant DePatie when regulations were introduced to improve the safety of late night retail workers. Regulations that require retail employees who work alone late at night to either be behind locked doors or have additional staff on site will protect workers. The third option that will come into effect on April 15 does nothing to enhance the safety of workers over what the current regulations require.

Unfortunately, the sad reality is that many late night retailers will choose the most profitable method possible, not the safest method, when it comes to protecting workers. Worker safety should not be jeopardized when regulation changes are made. We believe that adding the third option as it now stands is a step backwards in providing a safe workplace. Rather than preventing a violent robbery in the first place, which should be the regulatory goal, workers will have to be content with evidence, hopefully, being caught on tape and a notification sent out after the fact.

We urge WorkSafeBC to reconsider recent changes to the regulations; changes that employers will readily adopt over more stringent measures despite whatever additional risks it will mean to their employees.

Sincerely,

Dave DiMaria
Health and Safety Officer
Telecommunications Workers Union

Cc: Christy Clark, Premier of British Columbia, Christy.clark.mla@leg.bc.ca
Margaret MacDiarmid, B.C. Minister of Labour, Margaret.macdiarmid.mla@leg.bc.ca
Jim Sinclair, B.C. Federation of Labour, exec@bcfed.ca
TWU National Health and Safety Committee, twusafety@twu-stt.ca