

October 1, 2008

Alberta and Philippines sign worker memorandum

Manila... Alberta and the Philippines have signed a Memorandum of Understanding that will help ease labour shortages and improve the flow of Filipino workers into the province.

“The Philippines has been a significant contributor to the economic success of Alberta as a major source of workers to the province,” said Hector Goudreau, Minister of Employment and Immigration. “This agreement is about working with the Philippine government to ensure Filipino workers understand what skills are in demand, and about protecting the interests of workers coming here.”

“This Memorandum of Understanding will pave the way for the orderly and ethical recruitment of Filipino workers to Alberta. It also provides a way for our two governments to jointly address our workers' concerns about living and working in Alberta,” said Marianito Roque, the Philippines Secretary of Labor and Employment.

The agreement lays the groundwork for future cooperation between the two countries. Under the agreement, both governments will explore shared priorities, such as meeting occupational standards, improving recruitment and employment practices, and promoting employment opportunities in Alberta.

The agreement also makes a very clear statement about recruitment fees: Filipino workers should not be charged recruitment fees by employment brokers in the Philippines when they come to Alberta.

The agreement contains information on:

- fees charged by employment agencies;
- the sharing of labour market information;
- exploring potential partnerships to deliver Alberta-recognized nursing and related education programs in the Philippines;
- how Alberta and the Philippines will approach the comparability of credentials and qualifications in the skilled trades; and
- ongoing cooperation.

“What this agreement boils down to is recognizing the needs of Alberta’s economy while making sure that when workers arrive from the Philippines, they are treated fairly and can benefit from their time here,” said Carl Benito, MLA for Edmonton Mill-Woods, who participated in the signing event.

Last year, Alberta welcomed nearly 6,000 temporary foreign workers from the Philippines.

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