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NEWS RELEASE

Petition, graveyard-shift tour launched for Jimmy's Law

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YORKTON – The NDP-sponsored bill named for Jimmy Wiebe gained momentum on Thursday as a legislative petition was launched in his hometown, along with a series of late-night tours of businesses to meet with workers who could be affected if the bill becomes law.

Wiebe's best friend Aaron Nagy and his sister, Debi Paton, were joined in Yorkton by NDP labour critic David Forbes where Nagy and Paton became the first to sign the legislative petition in support of Jimmy's Law. Forbes will present the petition during the spring sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Throughout March and April, Nagy and Forbes will tour the province to visit late-night workers to see, first-hand, graveyard-shift working conditions and take stock of the number of workers working alone or in pairs. Forbes will also be consulting workers and stakeholders on the private member's bill, which he introduced in December.

"I'm relieved to see the law we've asked for getting closer to reality," said Nagy. "Jimmy's Law can provide real protection for workers and the government should recognize that simple steps need to be taken to protect employees and their families from tragedy."

Paton, supportive of Nagy's efforts in getting Jimmy's Law drafted, said that Nagy and the NDP "are taking a step forward for worker protection. You never move forward without taking a step."

Nagy and Forbes began their tour by visiting a number of retail businesses in Yorkton during the late-night shift on Wednesday. They'll continue with similar visits until April 28, the Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job.

Jimmy's Law is a private member's bill that would amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act. The changes would require employers to schedule a minimum of two employees for late night shifts or ensure that a worker is safe behind a locked door or barrier when working alone.

"Jimmy's Law puts into regulation a basic safe-workplace practice," said David Forbes, who is the MLA for Saskatoon Centre. "We're calling on the Sask. Party government to get behind the NDP's proposal to improve protections for working women and men better than we do today."

Wiebe was shot twice and killed during a robbery while working the night shift at a Shell gas station in Yorkton in June, 2011. Jimmy's Law, numbered Bill 601, could pass during the spring sitting of the Legislature.

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