

October 29, 2025

The Honourable Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Jobs & Families
Minister Responsible for Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario
Member of Parliament for Thunder Bay—Superior North, Ontario
140 Promenade du Portage
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0J9

Via electronic mail: MinistrePT-LPMinister@labour-travail.gc.ca

The Honourable John Zerucelli, P.C., M.P.
Secretary of State for Labour
Member of Parliament for Etobicoke North, Ontario
140 Promenade du Portage
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0J9

Via electronic mail: john.zerucelli@parl.gc.ca

Dear Minister and Secretary of State:

On behalf of Canada's business community – including chambers of commerce, boards of trade, small businesses, and industry associations representing the full breadth of the national supply chain – we are calling on the Government to act quickly to promote long-term labour stability in Canada's West Coast ports by establishing a B.C.-wide geographic certification.

As your government prepares to introduce its first Budget and deliver a plan to build Canada into the strongest economy in the G7, we urge the government to act to ensure a stable foundation for sustainable labour relations at our West Coast ports.

As you will recall, waterfront operations and the associated rail and trucking at Canada's West Coast ports experienced 24 days of shutdowns within a 16-month span between 2023 and 2024. These shutdowns delayed critical exports, disrupted an estimated \$19.2 billion worth of cargo, raised costs for consumers and businesses alike, while detrimentally impacting Canada's reputation as a reliable trading partner.

Timely action is of the essence, as the next round of collective bargaining is less than 14 months away. Without urgent and meaningful action, the instability that led to supply chain chaos in recent years could quickly return.

Following the 13-day strike in British Columbia, the Government **initiated an Industrial Inquiry Commission** (IIC) led by Vince Ready and Amanda Rogers who studied the underlying issues in labour disputes at Canada's West Coast ports. Their **final report** concluded that the longshore bargaining system is "broken but not beyond repair."

The Commission underlined that the parties' existing voluntary bargaining structure is contributing to instability at our West Coast ports, and that geographic certification would limit opportunities for disputes while contributing to greater stability. The voluntary structure on the West Coast is an outlier among Canadian ports, and the inconsistency prevents progress on reliability and stability in Canada's national supply chain. The risk of negotiations on an enterprise, or company-by-company basis, could lead to chronic uncertainty, multiple rolling labour disruptions, and compounded challenges for West Coast port operations.

The report highlights a distinct path forward, suggesting the creation of a B.C.-wide geographic certification that would allow for an accreditation of the employer's organization and establishing a single bargaining unit for longshoring work on the West Coast.

The IIC's proposed amendments to the *Canada Labour Code* would not unilaterally impose a bargaining structure on the parties, as the suggested legislative changes would allow an application to be brought to the Canadian Industrial Relations Board to consider the most appropriate bargaining structure, including a potential single geographic certification. This is critical to provide certainty to bargaining and align Canada's West Coast with the rest of the country's ports, as well as our major competitors in the United States.

This change would be focused on ensuring that negotiations are not fragmented, while continuing to preserve the collective bargaining process. If West Coast ports remain an outlier, further disruptions could result in the diversion of Canadian cargo through U.S. ports once again, while Canada's reputation as a reliable trading partner would be eroded further.

Simply put, Canadians cannot afford another shutdown at our West Coast ports. These disputes directly harm exporters, importers, and consumers across Canada by delaying the movement of critical minerals, agricultural products, manufacturing components, consumer goods, and more. Each day of disruption undermines business confidence, threatens jobs across industries, and puts Canada's international trade relationships at risk. As we focus on strengthening internal trade and diversifying commercial partnerships across the globe, reliability in our West Coast ports is key to a resilient, competitive supply chain that supports Canada's broader economic goals.

We urge the Government to act quickly by including the necessary legislative changes in the Fall 2025 Budget Implementation Act that would enable a B.C.-wide geographic certification, setting the stage to strengthen labour stability and ensure the resilience of a critical gateway for the nation.

The business community stands ready to work with government to support this goal. Together, we can build reliable supply chains, protect Canadian jobs, and strengthen confidence in our economy for years to come.

Sincerely,

ABBOTSFORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	ALBERTA'S INDUSTRIAL HEARTLAND ASSOCIATION
ALBERTA CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE	BC MARINE TERMINAL OPERATORS ASSOCIATION
ATLANTIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	BC TRUCKING ASSOCIATION
BC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	BRITISH COLUMBIA CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION
BURNABY BOARD OF TRADE	CANADIAN COATINGS ASSOCIATION
CAMBRIDGE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	CANADIAN FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS
CENTRAL & NORTH HASTINGS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	CANADIAN FOOD EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION
CHETWYND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	CANADIAN FRANCHISE ASSOCIATION
CLARENVILLE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	CANADIAN FUELS ASSOCIATION
COMOX VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	CANADIAN MANUFACTURERS & EXPORTERS
DELTA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	CANADIAN MEAT COUNCIL
EDSON AND DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	CANADIAN SUGAR COUNCIL
FORT MCMURRAY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	CANOLA COUNCIL OF CANADA
FORT SASKATCHEWAN & LAMONT COUNTY REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	CHAMBER OF SHIPPING
GREATER BARRIE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	CIFFA CORP
GREATER KINGSTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	FENESTRATION CANADA
GREATER KITCHENER WATERLOO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	FERTILIZER CANADA
GREATER LANGLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	FOOD HEALTH & CONSUMER PRODUCTS OF CANADA
GREATER NIAGARA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	FREIGHT MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF CANADA
GREATER VANCOUVER BOARD OF TRADE	GLOBAL AUTOMAKERS OF CANADA
HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	GRAIN GROWERS OF CANADA
HAMILTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	GREATER VANCOUVER GATEWAY COUNCIL
HIGH RIVER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	HEARTH, PATIO & BARBECUE ASSOCIATION OF CANADA
LETHBRIDGE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS AND BUSINESSES ASSOCIATION
LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	MARITIME EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATION
NIPAWIN & DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE INC.	NATIONAL MARITIME GROUP
NORTH VANCOUVER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	PRIVATE MOTOR TRUCK COUNCIL OF CANADA
OAKVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	RAILWAY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA
OTTAWA BOARD OF TRADE	RESPONSIBLE DISTRIBUTION CANADA
PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE & DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	SASKATCHEWAN HEAVY CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION
PRINCE ALBERT & DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	SHIPPING FEDERATION OF CANADA
SAINT-QUENTIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (NEW BRUNSWICK)	SPIRITS CANADA
SASKATCHEWAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	
SAULT STE. MARIE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	

SOUTHEAST ALBERTA CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE
ST. ALBERT AND DISTRICT CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE
SURREY & WHITE ROCK BOARD OF TRADE
TOFINO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
TRI-CITIES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
WESTSHORE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
WEYBURN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
WINDSOR ESSEX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE