

June 13, 2023

Hon. Seamus O'Regan, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Labour
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Hon. Omar Alhabra, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Transport
Email: TC.MinisterofTransport-MinistredesTransports.TC@tc.gc.ca

Re: Federal Government Engagement on Labour Stability on Canada's West Coast

Dear Ministers:

We are expressing our alarm over the potential for a labour disruption that would affect ports in British Columbia, including the largest port in Canada, the Port of Vancouver and Port of Prince Rupert respectively, to add another shock to our supply chain. The [Supply Chain Task Force report noted](#) that "wild swings in supply and demand due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as climate shocks (e.g., wildfires, floods) and growing geopolitical uncertainty, have put trade norms and flows at risk." The potential for a labour dispute adds to an already challenging situation.

The collective agreements between the BCMEA and ILWU Canada on behalf of the Longshore Locals and Local 514 Ship & Dock Foremen expired on March 31, 2023. We understand that either party could be in a position to strike or lock out as early as June 24. Such actions would disrupt west coast ports and have immediate impacts across Canada's already fragile supply chain in as little as two weeks. A breakdown in port operations would severely impact manufacturing, retail, agriculture, automotive dealers, and energy industries across the country.

On behalf of the Canadian business community, we request the government's active engagement with this bargaining process and that it be prepared to act to prevent a labour disruption. It is imperative that the federal government work with the parties to secure an affordable, stable, and efficient supply chain.

Canadians and businesses alike require stability in our supply chains. According to the Canadian Chamber's Business Data Lab, nearly a quarter of businesses have stated that supply chain issues will continue to remain a key obstacle to growth and that they expect these challenges to persist well into next year. A labour disruption will have a significant and immediate impact on the livelihoods of Canadians and the health of Canadian businesses that rely on the safe and efficient flow of Canadian goods.

As Canada's largest gateway, Canada's west coast ports handle over \$500 million worth of cargo, including agri-foods, perishable goods, potash, critical minerals and household necessities, every day. Approximately sixteen percent of Canada's total traded goods flow through our west coast terminals. The trade our west coast ports facilitate ensures critical products arrive in Canada and make their way to store shelves and our factories efficiently and affordably. Any work stoppage will damage the Canadian economy, fanning inflation and increasing costs for Canadians. Our exporting industries could face delays in getting their

products to market, hampering their ability to earn income and secure global contracts that drive investment and support jobs here at home.

We respect the right to collective bargaining and believe sincerely that the best deals are reached at the table. Government must continue to work closely with all parties to reach an agreement to avoid a work stoppage. Canada's economy and our supply chains cannot afford another disruption. Government must be prepared to act immediately in the event bargaining breaks down. A functioning, efficient, reliable, and affordable supply chain is critical to Canada's economy. Combatting inflation, restoring price stability and strengthening our arrangements with countries in desperate need of stable, reliable trading partners require a dependable, predictable port system. Without stability, we will jeopardize the success and livelihoods of Canadians and their businesses and the growth and prosperity of our country and our allies.

Sincerely,

Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade
Alberta Chambers of Commerce
Association of Home Appliance
Manufacturers
Association Québécoise de l'Industrie du
Cannabis
BC Council of Forest Industries
Belleville Chamber of Commerce
Brampton Board of Trade
British Columbia Chamber of Commerce
British Columbia Trucking Association
Burnaby Board of Trade
Business Council Of British Columbia
Business Council of Canada
Calgary Chamber of Commerce
Cambridge Chamber of Commerce
Camrose & District Chamber of Commerce
Canadian Association of Importers and
Exporters
Canadian Automobile Dealers Association
Canadian Canola Growers Association
Canadian Chamber of Commerce
Canadian Construction Association
Canadian Federation of Independent
Business
Canadian International Freight Forwarders
Association
Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters

Canadian Meat Council

Canadian Produce Marketing Association

Canadian Produce Marketing Association

Canadian Sugar Institute

Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce
Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce

Grimsby & District Chamber of Commerce
Independent Contractors and Businesses
Association
Kamloops & District Chamber of Commerce
Kelowna Chamber of Commerce
Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce
London Chamber of Commerce
Madoc & District Chamber of Commerce
Manitoba Chambers of Commerce
Medtech Canada
Milton Chamber of Commerce
Minning Association of British Columbia
Mississauga Board of Trade
New Car Dealers Association of BC

Newcastle & District Chamber of Commerce
Nipawin & District Chamber of Commerce
Oakville Chamber of Commerce
Ontario Chamber of Commerce
Orillia & District Chamber of Commerce

Ottawa Board of Trade
Owen Sound & District Chamber of
Commerce
Parkland Chamber of Commerce
Penticton & Wine Country Chamber of
Commerce
Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of
Commerce
Prince Albert & District Chamber of
Commerce
Prince Rupert and District Chamber of
Commerce

Canadian Toy Association

Canola Council of Canada

Chamber Of Commerce Brantford-Brant

Chamber of Shipping of British Columbia

Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce

Chemistry Industry Association of Canada

Chetwynd Chamber of Commerce

Clarenceville Area Chamber of Commerce

Delta Chamber of Commerce

Didsbury & District Chamber of Commerce

Dufferin Board of Trade

Edmundston Region Chamber of Commerce

Edson and District Chamber of Commerce

Electro-Federation Canada

Enserva

FETCO

Fertilizer Canada

Food Producers of Canada

Food, Health & Consumer Products of
Canada

Forest Products Association of Canada

Fort McMurray Chamber of Commerce

Fort St. John & District Chamber of
Commerce

Freight Management Association of Canada

Grande Prairie & District Chamber of
Commerce

Greater Barrie Chamber of Commerce

Greater Charlottetown Area Chamber of
Commerce

Greater Fort Erie Chamber of Commerce

Greater Kitchener Waterloo Chamber of
Commerce

Greater Langley Chamber of Commerce

Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce

Greater Parkland Regional Chamber of
Commerce

Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce

Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce

Greater Vancouver Board of Trade

Railway Association of Canada

Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association of
Canada

Red Deer & District Chamber of Commerce

Redwater & District Chamber of Commerce

Responsible Distribution Canada

Restaurants Canada

Retail Council of Canada

Richmond Chamber of Commerce

Sarnia Lambton Chamber of Commerce

Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce

Shipping Federation of Canada

Smithers District Chamber Of Commerce

Spirits Canada

Sudbury East Chamber of Commerce

Surrey Board of Trade

Sussex & District Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce for Greater
Moncton

The Chamber of Commerce Niagara Falls,
Canada

The Mining Association of Canada

The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce

Tillsonburg District Chamber of Commerce

Toronto Region Board of Trade

Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce

Vegreville & District Chamber of Commerce

Vermilion & District Chamber of Commerce

Welland/Pelham Chamber of Commerce

Western Canadian Shippers' Coalition

Weyburn Chamber of Commerce

Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of
Commerce

Winkler & District Chamber of Commerce

Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce

Yarmouth & Area Chamber of Commerce

Yorkton Chamber Of Commerce