



---

19 July 2023

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A3

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing on behalf of the Shipping Federation of Canada to express our grave concern over the resumption of strike action by the west coast longshore workers represented by the ILWU, which occurred yesterday evening a mere five days after port operations had restarted after a highly disruptive 13-day work stoppage. This development will add untold complexity and delay to what was already a complicated recovery process, and cause irreparable damage to Canada's already tenuous reputation as a reliable trading partner.

Given the seriousness of these impacts, we implore the government to take decisive and immediate action to resolve this situation by recalling Parliament so it can introduce back-to-work legislation on the most expedited basis possible. Although we appreciate the government's efforts to resolve this issue through a negotiated settlement between the two parties, it is clear that this is no longer a viable path forward, and that further attempts at negotiation will only serve to extend and amplify the losses and hardship that Canadian businesses and the economy have already suffered over the last several weeks.

As the owners, operators and agents of the ocean ships that carry Canada's exports and imports to and from world markets, our members are quite literally on the front lines of experiencing and responding to the impacts of this ongoing work stoppage. After dealing with the disruptions and uncertainty created by the original 13-day strike, ships carrying cargo to and from the ports of Vancouver and Prince Rupert once again find themselves at sea with only a handful of options at their disposal, all of which have significant repercussions that will ultimately reverberate throughout the Canadian economy.

The repercussions will extend well into the future, as carriers will not only be seeking alternative (and necessarily more expensive) routings for the duration of the strike and recovery period, but also reconsidering their commitment to calling Canadian west coast ports in the longer term, given the efficiency and reliability challenges that have plagued this gateway in recent years, and the reputational damage that it continues to incur. As a country which relies on international ships to carry the vast majority of its world trade, Canada can ill afford to risk losing the confidence of major carriers calling its ports, particularly in a context where U.S. gateways are positioned to offer a more competitive and reliable alternative.

We have no doubt that the government fully understands the gravity of the current situation and the extent to which its escalating impacts are affecting Canadians on a daily basis. Indeed, every day the government allow this labour disruption to continue will only bring additional hardship and loss to Canadian businesses and the Canadian economy. We therefore call upon you – in the strongest terms

---

**SHIPPING FEDERATION OF CANADA**

625 René-Lévesque, Suite 800, Montreal, QC, H3B 1R2 (514-849-2325)  
1055 West Hastings, Suite 300, Vancouver, BC, V6E 2E9 (778-373-1518)  
[www.shipfed.ca](http://www.shipfed.ca)

possible - to take immediate action to introduce back-to-work legislation in Parliament. This is the only remaining viable path forward, and the only means of bringing this untenable situation to an end so the hard work of rebuilding trust in Canada's transportation system and supply chain can get underway.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CHH', written in a cursive style.

Chris Hall  
President and CEO

cc: Honourable Seamus O'Regan, Minister of Labour  
Honourable Omar Alghabra, Minister of Transport