



KEEP CANADA MOVING

Labour, Management and Supply Chain
in the Rail and Maritime Sectors

JUNE 2026

Report of the Standing Senate Committee
on Transport and Communications

The Honourable David M. Wells, Chair
The Honourable Donna Dasko, Deputy Chair



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The Committee Membership



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Chair



The Honourable
Donna Dasko
Deputy Chair

The Honourable Senators



Dawn Arnold



Réjean Aucoin



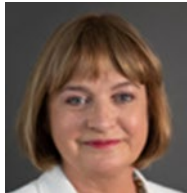
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Ex officio members of the Committee:

The Honourable Pierre Moreau, P.C., or the Honourable Patti LaBoucane-Benson

The Honourable Leo Housakos or the Honourable Yonah Martin

The Honourable Raymonde Saint-Germain or the Honourable Bernadette Clement
(*until January 4, 2026*)

The Honourable Lucie Moncion or the Honourable Joan Kingston (*since January 5, 2026*)

The Honourable Scott Tannas or the Honourable Rebecca Patterson (*since January 4, 2026*)

The Honourable Flordeliz (Gigi) Osler or the Honourable Robert Black (*since January 5, 2026*)

The Honourable Brian Francis or the Honourable Judy A. White

Other senators who have participated in the study:

The Honourable Andrew Cardozo

The Honourable Katherine Hay

The Honourable Tony Loffreda

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Order of Reference

Extract from the *Journals of the Senate* of Wednesday, October 8, 2025:

The Honourable Senator Smith moved, seconded by the Honourable Senator Manning:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications be authorized to examine and report on maintenance of activities or essential services in the federally regulated rail and marine sectors in the case of labour disruptions;

That, in particular, the committee should examine:

- (a) how “immediate and serious danger to the safety or health of the public” is applied when determining when work is considered essential under section 87.4 of the *Canada Labour Code*, and the circumstances under which certain activities must be maintained in the event of a strike or lockout;
- (b) the impacts of labour disruptions on users of federally regulated rail and marine networks, on Canadian consumers, and on Canada’s supply chains;
- (c) in light of these impacts, whether the transportation of certain goods on federally regulated transportation networks should be maintained in the event of a strike or lockout;
- (d) the recent use by the Minister of Labour of section 107 of the *Canada Labour Code* to refer labour disputes in federally regulated transportation sectors to the Canada Industrial Relations Board in order to maintain or secure industrial peace; and
- (e) the use of section 107 of the *Canada Labour Code* by the Minister — instead of “back to work” legislation passed by both Houses of Parliament — as a means to end a labour disruption;

That the committee be permitted, notwithstanding usual practices, to deposit reports on this study with the Clerk of the Senate if the Senate is not then sitting, and that the reports be deemed to have been tabled in the Senate; and

That the committee submit its final report to the Senate no later than June 26, 2026, and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings for 180 days after the tabling of the final report.

The question being put on the motion, it was adopted.

Shaila Anwar

Clerk of the Senate

Acronyms

BCFMWU	BC Ferry & Marine Workers' Union
BCMEA	British Columbia Maritime Employers Association
CFA	Canadian Federation of Agriculture
CFA	Canadian Fuels Association
CFIB	Canadian Federation of Independent Business
CIAC	Chemistry Industry Association of Canada
CIFFA	Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association
CIRB	Canada Industrial Relations Board
CLC	Canadian Labour Congress
CMC	Canadian Meat Council
CN	Canadian National Railway Company
CPA	Canadian Propane Association
CPKC	Canadian Pacific Kansas City Limited
ESDC	Employment and Social Development Canada
FETCO	Federally Regulated Employers - Transportation and Communications
FMA	Freight Management Association of Canada
FMCS	Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILWU	International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada
MAC	Mining Association of Canada
MEA	Maritime Employers Association
NMB	National Mediation Board
OEC	OEC Overseas Express Consolidators Inc.
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFA	Ontario Federation of Agriculture

PEB	Presidential Emergency Board
RAC	Railway Association of Canada
RLA	U.S. Railway Labor Act
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
TCRC	Teamsters Canada Rail Conference
WCSLRA	Western Canadian Short Line Railway Association

Executive Summary

An efficient transportation network is crucial to the smooth operation of supply chains and to Canada's economic prosperity. While Canada's transportation infrastructure has experienced various kinds of disruptions in recent years, the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications has focused on the labour disruptions that have occurred in Canada's rail and marine sectors in recent years.

As Canada seeks to diversify its trading partners, witnesses representing various sectors of Canada's economy told the committee that the Canadian companies they represent rely on railways and ports to import inputs or export their goods. They also explained that the multimodal nature of a supply chain means that when one part is shut down, it can have a domino effect on the others, disrupting the entire chain.

To strengthen the stability of labour relations in the rail and marine sectors and to improve the reliability of Canada's supply chains, the committee considered whether the collective bargaining process needed to be modernized in order to reduce the frequency of work stoppages or mitigate their impacts. It is in this context that the committee studied the provisions of the *Canada Labour Code* dealing with the maintenance of activities in the event of a strike or lockout, as well as the tools available to the Minister of Labour to intervene, such as back-to-work legislation or the Minister's powers under section 107 of the *Code*.

Witnesses provided the committee with several recommendations for modernizing the collective bargaining process, including measures to maintain activities, prevent work stoppages and facilitate a return to work. Some also urged the committee to consider in its deliberations the fact that in 2015 the Supreme Court of Canada recognized that the right to strike is protected by the Constitution.

In light of this, the committee recommends creating a Supply Chain Reliability Act or amending the *Canada Labour Code* in order to establish an alternative dispute resolution process for the marine and rail sectors in Canada when a work stoppage could adversely affect the national interest. Given the time required to enact such legislation or to amend the *Code*, the committee believes that the government must urgently consider the recommendations of the Industrial Inquiry Commission on West Coast Ports.

Furthermore, the committee recommends amending section 87.4 of the *Canada Labour Code* to remove the word "immediate" from the requirement to designate an essential service. It also suggests amending section 107 to set out explicitly the powers of the Minister of Labour. Lastly, the committee recommends that the government define clear criteria governing the use of section 107 and that any amendment to this section be made in consultation with employer and union representatives.

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Whereas the committee has heard how work stoppages at Canada's ports and railroads create an outsized and sweeping impact on the well-being of Canadians, Canada's economic security and national security and the country's reputation as a reliable trading partner,

That the Government of Canada establish a separate Supply Chain Reliability Act and/or amend the *Canada Labour Code* to achieve the following:

- The establishment of a permanent, independent specialized supply chain tribunal whose members have expertise in the marine and rail sectors.
- Where the tribunal is of the opinion that a strike or lockout with respect to a collective agreement or group of agreements in the marine or rail sectors would adversely affect the national interest, the tribunal will implement an alternative dispute resolution model that includes mediation and arbitration, with a mediator-arbitrator chosen by the tribunal in consultation with the union and employer.
- The selected mediator-arbitrator will be involved from the start of the collective bargaining process and determine the timelines for that process.
- In the event that the mediator-arbitrator provides advice that an agreement cannot be reached through the collective bargaining process, the tribunal will inform the Minister of Labour, who shall direct the mediator-arbitrator to begin the formal mediation-arbitration process.
- In the event that the mediation-arbitration process does not achieve an agreement, that the Governor in Council, if in their opinion it is in the national interest, may order binding arbitration and prohibit the strike or lockout.
- Throughout the process, the tribunal shall ensure that the government and the public are provided with appropriate transparency regarding the negotiations, in the interest of preventing bargaining in bad faith and protecting workers and employers.

Recommendation 2

Given that formal consultations have recently concluded on strengthening labour relations and better supporting workers, drawing in part from the *Industrial Inquiry Commission on West Coast Ports: Final Report*, and given the time required to implement a Supply Chain Reliability Act and/or amend the *Canada Labour Code*, that the Government of Canada urgently consider the recommendations of the aforementioned report.

Recommendation 3

That the Government of Canada amend section 87.4 of the *Canada Labour Code* to remove the word “immediate” from the requirement to designate an essential service in order to allow the Canada Industrial Relations Board to consider a work stoppage that poses a serious, but not imminent, danger to the safety or health of the public.

Recommendation 4

That the Government of Canada amend section 107 of the *Canada Labour Code* to set out explicitly the powers of the Minister of Labour. That the Government of Canada also identify clear criteria, such as an economic harm threshold, governing the use of section 107 and that any modernization of this section be carried out in consultation with employer and union representatives.

Introduction

Canada is a vast country that relies on an extensive transportation network to move goods from one end of the country to the other, as well as internationally, and to connect communities. The entry and exit points for goods, along with domestic and international transportation networks, form an integrated system that provides Canadian companies with access to global markets.

In recent years, Canada's supply chains have experienced several disruptions, such as labour disputes in the transportation sector, extreme weather events, wildfires and pandemics. These disruptions, or the risk of such disruptions, have often resulted in slowing or shutting down operations in critical links of these chains, such as ports and railways, affecting the ability of Canadian companies to export or import goods. Since Canada's national transportation network is characterized by the concentration of activities in the hands of a small number of transportation service providers, users have little or no alternative when services are suspended.

Canada must also deal with an uncertain geopolitical landscape and shifting global trade dynamics. As Canada actively seeks to make its supply chains more reliable and to diversify its trading partners, it must be able to rely on efficient and resilient transportation networks.

It is in this context that the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications (the committee) focused on labour disputes in the federally regulated rail and marine sectors, two critically important sectors for expanding Canada's international trade. The committee looked into the impact of these labour disputes on users of the rail and marine networks, Canadian consumers, and Canada's supply chains. It also considered the need to revisit certain *Canada Labour Code* provisions pertaining to the maintenance of activities in the event of a work stoppage.

As part of this study, the committee heard 45 witnesses and received 36 briefs. This report summarizes the stakeholders' observations on how work stoppages or the threat of work stoppages affect the federally regulated rail and marine sectors, the collective bargaining process, the Government of Canada's efforts to facilitate a return to work and Canada's reputation as a reliable trading partner. It also presents various possible solutions to reduce the incidence of these work stoppages or mitigate their impacts.

Background

In Canada, the right to strike was recognized in 2015 by the Supreme Court in *Saskatchewan Federation of Labour*. The Court held that the right to strike was constitutionally protected, but that it did not, however, offer an absolute guarantee.

Legislative jurisdiction over transportation is shared between the federal, provincial and territorial governments. Generally speaking, the provinces and territories have jurisdiction over local businesses, namely transportation service providers that operate a network within a given province. Railway lines that cross provincial borders fall under federal jurisdiction. As for the marine sector, the federal government has exclusive jurisdiction over navigation.¹

For federally regulated businesses, the [*Canada Labour Code*](#) sets out the rights and responsibilities of employers and workers.² In the rail transportation sector, these companies include the Canadian Pacific Kansas City Limited (CPKC) and the Canadian National Railway Company (CN). As for marine transportation, the scope of regulated transportation service providers is broader and includes port services, marine shipping, and ferries that provide international or interprovincial services.³

As part of its study, the committee focused primarily on labour disputes involving freight transportation service providers. Although there are federally regulated passenger rail and marine services, such as those offered by VIA Rail Canada Inc. and Marine Atlantic Inc., they will not be discussed in this report.

Overview of Recent Labour Disputes

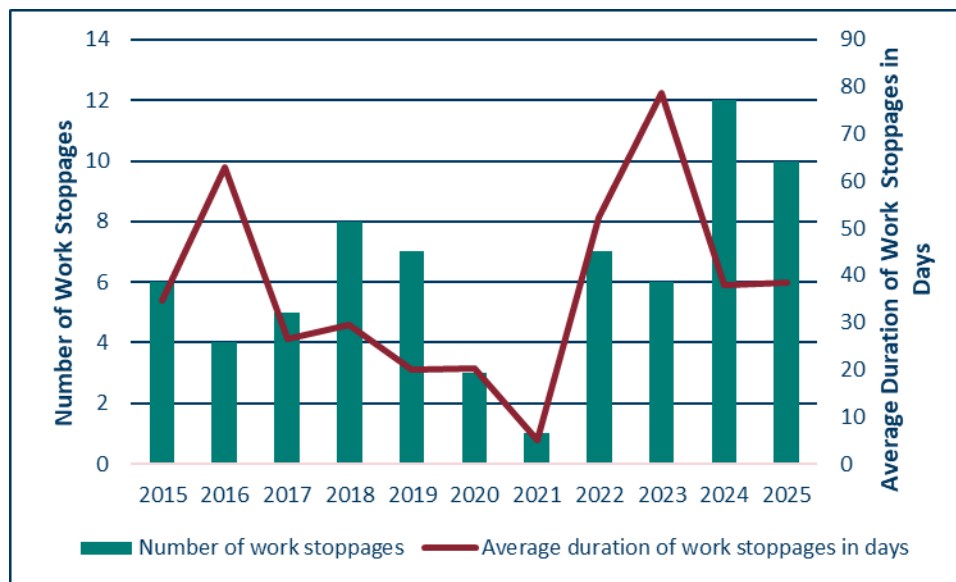
During its study, the committee heard about recent labour disputes in the federally regulated marine and rail sectors. According to Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) data, the number of work stoppages over the past decade in the federally regulated transportation industry was higher in 2024 and 2025 than in previous years (see Figure 1).

¹ Isabelle Brideau, Laurence Brosseau and Allison Lowenger, [*The Distribution of Legislative Powers: An Overview*](#), Publication No. 2019-35-E, Library of Parliament, January 3, 2022.

² Employment and Social Development Canada, [*Overview of the parts of the Canada Labour Code and how they apply to your workplace*](#).

³ Government of Canada, [*List of federally regulated industries and workplaces*](#).

Figure 1 – Work Stoppages in the Federally Regulated Transportation Industry, 2015-2025



Notes: Under the North American Industry Classification System, the transportation industry encompasses [codes 48 and 49](#), which includes businesses “primarily engaged in transporting passengers and goods, warehousing and storing goods, and providing services to these establishments.” As a result, this includes not only transportation and warehousing companies, but also postal and courier services. Work stoppages include strikes and lockouts lasting at least 10 person-days. For more technical information on the data presented in Figure 1, please refer to Employment and Social Development Canada, [Technical Notes](#).

Source: Figure prepared by the Library of Parliament using data obtained from Employment and Social Development Canada, “[Table 14-10-0352-01: Work stoppages in Canada, by jurisdiction and industry based on the North American Industry Classification System \(NAICS\), Employment and Social Development Canada - Labour Program occasional \(number unless otherwise noted\)](#),” database, accessed April 13, 2026.

During the committee’s study, several witnesses referred to recent labour disputes that disrupted Canada’s supply chains. The main disputes discussed were the intermittent work stoppages in fall 2024 at the ports of Vancouver and Montreal; the CN and CPKC lockout in August 2024, which brought the two largest rail carriers to a standstill for several hours; and the strike at British Columbia’s ports that lasted about ten days in August 2023.

During his appearance, Eric Harvey, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Railway Association of Canada (RAC), stated that Canada ranks near the bottom of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in terms of the number of days of work lost to work stoppages.⁴ In a brief submitted to the

⁴ Standing Senate Committee of Transport and Communications (TRCM), [Evidence](#), October 29, 2025 (Eric Harvey, President and Chief Executive Officer, Railway Association of Canada); Organisation for

committee, the RAC asserted that “[d]ays of work lost to work stoppages in Canada are more than 5 times the OECD median and 10 times the U.S.”⁵ In turn, the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) argued that these data should be treated with caution, as they present only a partial picture of labour-management relations in Canada.⁶ According to the CLC, OECD data actually show that “the historical trend in Canada has been a reduction in average work days lost since the 1990s of nearly two-thirds.”

Various witnesses repeatedly stressed that most collective bargaining negotiations in federally regulated sectors are resolved without a work stoppage.⁷ That said, as stated by the Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB or the Board), “a strike or lockout is a legitimate part of the collective bargaining process,” provided they are used in accordance with the provisions of the *Canada Labour Code*.⁸

When a strike or lockout occurs, the Minister of Labour has certain tools at their disposal to intervene, such as a back-to-work order or the powers conferred under section 107 of the *Canada Labour Code*. Section 107 allows the Minister to refer any matter to the CIRB or to direct the CIRB to do such things as the Minister deems necessary “to maintain or secure industrial peace” and “promote conditions favourable to the settlement of industrial disputes or differences.”⁹ This will be discussed later in this report, but while some witnesses consider it an imperfect albeit sometimes necessary tool, others are critical of its use as a way to end disputes. Between June 2024 and August 2025, ministers of Labour invoked section 107 seven times in response to disputes in the marine, rail and air sectors.¹⁰ By way of comparison, the last time the Government of Canada issued back-to-work legislation was in 2021 to end a strike at the Port of Montreal.¹¹

During the study, witnesses informed the committee that some collective agreements covering the federally regulated rail and marine sectors were set to

Economic Co-operation and Development, *Negotiating Our Way Up: Collective Bargaining in a Changing World of Work*, 2019, p. 66.

⁵ Railway Association of Canada, *brief*.

⁶ Canadian Labour Congress, *brief*.

⁷ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 4, 2025 (Bea Bruske, President, Canadian Labour Congress); *Evidence*, October 29, 2025 (Nathan Cato, Assistant Vice-President, Government Affairs Canada, Canadian Pacific Kansas City); Federally Regulated Employers in Transportation and Communications Organization, *brief*; Unifor, *brief*; Railway Association of Canada, *brief*; *Evidence*, November 5, 2025 (Greg Moffatt, President and Chief Executive Officer, Chemistry Industry Association of Canada).

⁸ Canada Industrial Relations Board, *No. 06–Unlawful Strikes and Lockouts*.

⁹ *Canada Labour Code*, R.S.C., 1985, c. L-2, s. 107.

¹⁰ Government of Canada, *Question Period Note: Section 107 Referrals*, Question Period note for the Minister of Jobs and Families, May 23, 2025.

¹¹ *Port of Montreal Operations Act, 2021*, S.C. 2021, c. 6.

expire in 2026, raising concerns about future labour disputes.¹² According to ESDC data, collective agreements covering CN and West Coast ports employees are set to expire by the end of the year.¹³

Portrait of the Marine and Rail Sectors in Canada

According to Transport Canada, in 2024 the transportation and warehousing sector “contributed \$96.5 billion directly to Canada’s economy, representing 4.3% of the country’s gross domestic product.”¹⁴ In 2024, the share of various modes of transportation in Canada’s international trade was 45.9% for road, 21.1% for marine, 11.6% for air, 10.6% for rail, and 10.8% for other modes of transportation.¹⁵

The Canadian rail network spans 48,000 route-kilometres of track, and the two major Class I freight railways,¹⁶ CN and CPKC, own 45% and 27% of the track, respectively.¹⁷ It is worth noting that the North American rail network is highly integrated, as both companies have operations extending from Canada to Mexico.¹⁸

Canada also has the world’s longest coastline, stretching approximately 243,000 km and linking the Pacific, Arctic and Atlantic Oceans.¹⁹ The marine sector includes hundreds of port facilities, including 17 Canada Port Authorities.²⁰ Among these, the

¹² TRCM, *Evidence*, November 4, 2025 (Michael Bourque, President and Chief Executive Officer, Fertilizer Canada); *Evidence*, October 29, 2025 (Daniel Safayeni, President and Chief Executive Officer, Federally Regulated Employers - Transportation and Communications); *Evidence*, November 18, 2025 (Natashia Stinka, Director, Public Affairs, Canpotex); *Evidence*, November 5, 2025, (Bridgitte Anderson, President and Chief Executive Officer, Greater Vancouver Board of Trade); British Columbia Maritime Employers Association, *brief*; Federally Regulated Employers - Transportation and Communications, *brief*.

¹³ Employment and Social Development, *2026 Listing of expiring collective agreements by expiry date (month), jurisdiction, and industry*.

¹⁴ Transport Canada, *Transportation in Canada 2024 - Annual Report*, 2025, p. 9.

¹⁵ The other modes of transportation include pipelines and courier and postal services. Government of Canada, “[Table EC5: Modal Shares in Canada’s International Trade, 2015–2024](#),” Transportation Data and Information Hub.

¹⁶ Under section 8 of the *Transportation Information Regulations*, a Class I railway company means “a railway company that realized gross revenues of at least \$250,000,000 for the provision of rail services in each of the two calendar years before the year in which information is provided pursuant to this Part.”

¹⁷ Transport Canada, *Transportation in Canada 2024 - Annual Report*, 2025, p. 35.

¹⁸ Canadian National Railway Company, *Shipping to and From Mexico*; Canadian Pacific Kansas City Limited, *Connecting a continent*.

¹⁹ Government of Canada, *Coastlines*; Government of Canada, *Geography*.

²⁰ Transport Canada, *Transportation in Canada*.

Port of Vancouver is the largest, handling nearly 160 million tonnes of cargo in 2024.²¹

During the study, representatives from various sectors of Canada’s economy told the committee that the Canadian companies they represent rely on railways and ports to import inputs or export their goods.²² For example, Natasha Stinka, Canpotex’s Director of Public Affairs, said the following:

*There are no alternatives to rail and port service for our potash shipments, as 100% of our potash is moved by rail from Saskatchewan mines to port.*²³

Geoff Smith, Vice President of Government Relations at the Mining Association of Canada (MAC), explained that “Canada’s rail freight system operates primarily as a dual monopoly” for its members, as CN and CPKC control 70% of Canada’s rail network.²⁴ He said that due to their generally remote locations, Canadian mining companies are typically “captive shippers,” as they can only access CN or CPKC.

Matthew Foss, Vice President of Research and Public Policy at the Canadian Council for Indigenous Business, added that in Northern and remote regions, Indigenous businesses often have no alternative, with most relying on a single rail company or port to transport their goods.²⁵ Witnesses also highlighted that replacing rail with trucking is not a viable solution.²⁶ Greg Moffatt, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Chemistry Industry Association of Canada (CIAC), explained that for

²¹ Government of Canada, “[Table M17: Cargo Tonnage Handled by Canada Port Authorities, 2015-2024](#),” Transportation Data and Information Hub.

²² TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Michael Bourque), (Pam Schwann, President, Saskatchewan Mining Association, Mining Association of Canada); [Evidence](#), November 5, 2025 (Matthew Foss, Vice-President, Research and Public Policy, Canadian Council for Indigenous Business); [Evidence](#), November 19, 2025 (Katie Kachur, Vice-President, Government Relations, West, Canadian Propane Association), (David Schick, Vice-President, Western Canada, Innovation and Regulatory Affairs, Canadian Fuels Association); [Evidence](#), November 18, 2025 (Bill Prybylski, Director, Canadian Federation of Agriculture), (Lauren Martin, Senior Director, Public Affairs and Corporate Counsel, Canadian Meat Council); Western Canadian Shippers Coalition, [brief](#); Grain Growers of Canada, [brief](#); Dow Chemical Canada, [brief](#); Ontario Federation of Agriculture, [brief](#); Kemira Water Solutions, Inc., [brief](#).

²³ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 18, 2025 (Natasha Stinka).

²⁴ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Geoff Smith, Vice President, Government Relations, Mining Association of Canada)

²⁵ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 5, 2025 (Matthew Foss).

²⁶ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 19, 2025 (Katie Kachur); [Evidence](#), November 18, 2025 (Russ Mallard, Chair, Canadian Meat Council); Western Canadian Shippers’ Coalition, [brief](#).

the industry he represents, one tank car is equivalent to three trucks.²⁷ He said that “at a large facility, replacing rail service would mean 240 more trucks per day....”

Given the country’s size, the lack of alternatives and the central role that transportation service providers play in Canada’s supply chains, witnesses argued that transportation is not just another industry, given that any disruption has a significant impact on Canada’s economy.²⁸

Similarly, witnesses also told the committee that the multimodal nature of a supply chain means that when one part of the chain is shut down, it can have a domino effect on the others. The Honourable Lisa Raitt, P.C., Co-Chair, Coalition for a Better Future and Vice-Chair, Global Investment Banking, CIBC Capital Markets, speaking as an individual, said that “supply chains are only as strong as the weakest link.”²⁹ Nathan Cato, CPKC’s Assistant Vice-President of Government Affairs Canada, said the following:

*[T]he railroad is a complex system, but it’s only one part of a supply chain. You have port terminals and customer facilities, and the whole thing has to work in synchronization.*³⁰

Rachel Mackenzie, Director of Communications and Government Relations for the Western Canadian Short Line Railway Association (WCSLRA), explained that short-line railways provide first- and last-mile transportation services by connecting Canadian businesses to Class I railways.³¹ She noted that most short-line railways operating in Western Canada are generally served by either CN or CPKC, but not both.

²⁷ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 5, 2025 (Greg Moffatt).

²⁸ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 28, 2025 (Ian Lee, Associate Professor, Sprott School of Business, Carleton University, As an individual), (Colin Stacey, Director General, Strategy, National Supply Chain Office), [Evidence](#), October 29, 2025 (Daniel Safayeni, President and Chief Executive Officer, Federally Regulated Employers - Transportation and Communications); [Evidence](#), November 5, 2025 (Chris Procyk, Vice President, Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan), (Bridgitte Anderson), (Greg Moffatt); [Evidence](#), November 19, 2025 (Katie Kachur); Retail Council of Canada, [brief](#).

²⁹ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 19, 2025 (The Honourable Lisa Raitt, P.C., Co-Chair, Coalition for a Better Future and Vice-Chair, Global Investment Banking, CIBC Capital Markets, As an individual).

³⁰ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 29, 2025 (Nathan Cato).

³¹ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 5, 2025 (Rachel Mackenzie, Director, Communications and Government Relations, Western Canadian Short Line Railway Association).

When there is a labour disruption on a Class I railway, connected short-line railways grind to a halt, as they are not receiving new railcars and cannot release any customer traffic.³²

Like other witnesses, David Schick, Vice President, Western Canada, Innovation and Regulatory Affairs at the Canadian Fuels Association (CFA), said that labour disputes are not the only factors causing instability in Canadian supply chains, citing as an example the atmospheric river that struck southwestern British Columbia in 2021.³³ Mr. Schick called for more targeted investments in maintaining and expanding rail and port capacity across the country. Similarly, Marc D. Bibeau, Executive Chairman of OEC Overseas Express Consolidators Inc. (OEC Group), said that it was necessary to “prioritize national gateway productivity and systemwide fluidity above all else.”³⁴

Several witnesses told the committee that even the threat of a work stoppage can have an impact on supply chains. Colin Stacey, Director General, Strategy, National Supply Chain Office,³⁵ explained that transportation operators and users must prepare weeks in advance of a potential work stoppage.³⁶ Mr. Stacey provided the following explanation:

Operators need to begin planning before an event occurs. For example, railways stop moving certain commodities in advance so that equipment and cargo are secured and safe and not stranded where they shouldn't be. Moreover, service recovery can take several days for each day of disruption. System users also need to make contingency arrangements to the extent possible, which is often costly.³⁷

³² Ibid.

³³ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 19, 2025 (David Schick); *Evidence*, October 28, 2025 (Colin Stacey); *Evidence*, November 18, 2025 (Kate Sauser, Policy Manager, Grain Growers of Canada); Canadian Chamber of Commerce, *brief*; International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada, *brief*; Grain Growers of Canada, *brief*.

³⁴ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 18, 2025 (Marc D. Bibeau, Executive Chairman, OEC Overseas Express Consolidators Inc.).

³⁵ The *National Supply Chain Office* was created on December 1, 2023, “to provide a federal focal point and lead efforts to strengthen Canada’s transportation and logistics supply chains.” Transport Canada, *National Supply Chain Office*.

³⁶ TRCM *Evidence*, October 28, 2025 (Colin Stacey).

³⁷ Ibid.

Mr. Stacey added that the impacts will “depend on the extent and length of a disruption, timing and the nature of the commodity being moved.”

The Impacts of Labour Disputes on Supply Chains

A majority of the witnesses said that labour disputes in the federally regulated rail and marine sectors were causing harm to the Canadian economy, disrupting supply chains and tarnishing Canada’s reputation abroad.

Beyond the economic impacts, disruptions can have significant consequences for Canada’s critical infrastructure systems and national public safety. Public Safety Canada identified four such impacts in a brief submitted to the committee:

Disruption of essential goods and services: Interruptions in the flow of goods, such as food, medical supplies and energy products, can affect health, safety, and economic stability.

Strain on emergency management and response capabilities: Reduced transportation capacity can hinder the delivery of emergency resources, evacuation operations, and disaster recovery efforts.

Economic and societal impacts: Prolonged disruptions can lead to shortages, increased costs, and reduced public confidence in the resilience of critical systems.

Cross-sector interdependencies: Rail and marine networks are integrated with other sectors such as energy, food and manufacturing; disruptions can escalate quickly across these systems.³⁸

Although labour disruptions pose risks to critical infrastructure sectors, Public Safety Canada’s role is to ensure that “these disruptions do not compromise public safety or national resilience by fostering coordination, situational awareness, and integrated response planning.”³⁹

For Professor Ian Lee of Carleton University, who appeared as an individual, “supply chain disruptions caused by periodic labour strikes or lockouts are extraordinarily damaging to the health and productivity of the economy, which is already in steep decline.”⁴⁰ According to Ms. Raitt, labour disruptions in rail and marine

³⁸ Public Safety Canada, [brief](#).

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 28, 2025 (Professor Ian Lee).

transportation are not “narrow sector issues”; they are actually “systemic economic shocks.”⁴¹

Representatives from the RAC, CN, CPKC, the WCSLRA and Federally Regulated Employers – Transportation and Communications (FETCO) outlined the economic impacts of labour disputes from their perspectives. In summary, these impacts are as follows:

- increased operating costs for rail companies;
- paralyzed supply chains and critical infrastructure;
- erosion of Canada’s global competitiveness;
- a decline in Canada’s productivity and gross domestic product;
- damage to Canada’s reputation as a reliable trading partner; and
- a loss of consumer confidence.

Safety concerns were raised particularly by rail companies. Transporting dangerous goods by rail requires additional precautions.⁴² In the event of a work stoppage, these goods require increased monitoring and must be stored in secure locations.

Mr. Schick told the committee that fuels are used in “every sector of our economy from agriculture and mining to tourism and emergency services.”⁴³ He said that when their delivery is compromised, the impacts are immediate and tangible:

- Operating costs are higher.
- There are inventory shortfalls and refineries are unable to process fuels.
- There are regional price pressures.
- Canada’s energy security is compromised.

Furthermore, the normal resumption of port and rail operations is a process that requires extensive planning and can take between three and seven days for each day of disruption.⁴⁴ For the WCSLRA, the resumption of rail services results in “significant congestion at yards and interchanges” for short-line railways.⁴⁵

⁴¹ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 26, 2025 (The Honourable Lisa Raitt).

⁴² TRCM, *Evidence*, October 29, 2025 (Nathan Cato).

⁴³ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 19, 2025 (David Schick).

⁴⁴ TRCM, *Evidence*, October 28, 2025 (Colin Stacey).

⁴⁵ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 5, 2025 (Rachel Mackenzie).

A disruption in propane deliveries to rural and remote regions can become “a health and safety crisis” within days, according to the Canadian Propane Association (CPA), since propane “is the primary source of affordable, reliable heat and power” in regions where natural gas is not available.⁴⁶ Given that approximately “75% of all propane produced in Canada is transported by rail,” it is critical that this product continue to flow during labour disruptions.

In the marine sector, even a brief disruption to supply chains has negative consequences for Canada’s ports. Not only is there a decline in revenue, but Port Authorities have seen shippers divert their cargo to U.S. ports. For example, the Port of Montreal experienced “recurring instability”⁴⁷ since 2020 as three labour disputes disrupted its commercial operations. Julie Gascon, President and CEO of the Montreal Port Authority, said that U.S. ports end up benefiting from these labour disputes.

[When] a labour dispute arises, we lose trade-wise when Canadian cargo relocates to the U.S. and also because Americans are aware of these issues, and they’ve taken a proactive approach to attract cargo. They’re also considering introducing port fees and administrative charges on American containers transiting through Canadian ports.⁴⁸

In a brief submitted to the committee, the Montreal Port Authority explained that, according to a 2025 analysis of Canadian traffic transiting through U.S. East Coast ports, the commercial leakage:

peaked at approximately 144,000 TEUs [twenty-foot equivalent units] in 2021 and today remains around 8% of the total volume handled by the Port of Montreal. The phenomenon primarily affects Ontario, which accounts for nearly 70% of the leakage, particularly through the ports of New York and Philadelphia, which capture the majority of diverted volumes.⁴⁹

The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade has observed the same trend as the Port of Montreal. In 2023 and 2024, disruptions to waterfront and rail operations at Canada’s West Coast ports delayed “critical exports, disrupted an estimated

⁴⁶ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 19, 2025 (Katie Kachur).

⁴⁷ Montreal Port Authority, *brief*.

⁴⁸ TRCM, *Evidence*, October 29, 2025 (Julie Gascon, Chief Executive Officer, Montreal Port Authority).

⁴⁹ Montreal Port Authority, *brief*.

\$19.2 billion worth of cargo and raised costs for consumers and businesses alike.”⁵⁰ The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade fears that further labour disruptions will once again lead to “the diversion of Canadian cargo through U.S. ports” and damage Canada’s reputation as a reliable trading partner.

Representatives from the agricultural sector also raised the negative impacts of strikes and lockouts on the production and delivery of agricultural products. For example, 2024 was a particularly difficult year for Canada’s grain producers. According to Scott Hepworth, Chair of the Grain Growers of Canada, the August 2024 work stoppage by the country’s two major railways occurred “in the middle of harvest.”⁵¹ Mr. Hepworth told the committee that these challenges were exacerbated by the work stoppage at the Port of Vancouver in September 2024. This is a critical period when grain must be transported to Canadian ports for export.

Canadian meat producers also depend on a reliable supply chain to ship their products within Canada and abroad. Given the nature of this product, meat cannot be stored for long periods without spoiling.⁵² Furthermore, labour disruptions in the transportation sector have negative impacts on meat exports abroad, according to the Canadian Meat Council (CMC):

*We recently, in the past 18 months, started to ship product to Japan on a frozen basis. It goes to Halifax, and it takes 50 to 60 days to end up in Osaka or whatever port of entry it arrives at. That’s a problem. People are looking down the road for dependable resources. The thought of a strike or port interruption would be enough to discourage potential buyers or existing customers to buy from us if there were a thought that the product they were buying may not come in.*⁵³

For the fertilizer industry, repeated rail and port labour stoppages represent “one of the most existential risks” facing these companies.⁵⁴ Michael Bourque, President and Chief Executive Officer of Fertilizer Canada, explained the impact that disruptions have on this sector:

⁵⁰ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 5, 2025 (Bridgitte Anderson).

⁵¹ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 18, 2025 (Scott Hepworth, Chair, Grain Growers of Canada).

⁵² TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 18, 2025 (Russ Mallard).

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Michael Bourque).

Fertilizer is not a commodity that can wait. It must be applied during very tight seasonal windows — just three to five weeks in both the spring and fall — when timing determines whether crops succeed or fail. When trains stop or ports close, fertilizer doesn't reach farmers, yields are severely impacted, and global food supplies are threatened.⁵⁵

The committee also addressed the impact of labour disputes on potash exports. Canada is the world's largest producer and exporter of potash, followed by Russia and Belarus.⁵⁶ Fertilizer Canada, the MAC and Canpotex stated that work stoppages at ports and on railways between 2022 and 2024 caused Canada to lose market share in this sector,⁵⁷ in addition to having “deep geopolitical consequences.”⁵⁸

Some witnesses also discussed the decision by the Canadian company Nutrien to build a new terminal at the Port of Longview in Washington State, U.S., rather than in Canada. The company, a major global provider of crops inputs and services, made the announcement in November 2025.⁵⁹ Ms. Raitt said that it had been “devastating to see Nutrien choose to use a port in the United States.”⁶⁰ In its brief, the National Maritime Group wrote that Nutrien had cited labour stability as one of the factors behind its decision.⁶¹

The business community is concerned about the negative impact of labour disputes. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) suffer “collateral damage” due to supply chain disruptions during strikes or lockouts.⁶² These SMEs face the following impacts:

- loss of sales;
- loss of perishable goods;
- inventory shortages;

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Natural Resources Canada, [Potash facts](#).

⁵⁷ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Michael Bourque), (Geoff Smith).

⁵⁸ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 18, 2025 (Natashia Stinka).

⁵⁹ Nutrien, [Leading the future of global agriculture](#); and Nutrien, [Nutrien Advancing Plans to Expand West Coast Capacity to Strengthen Canada's Global Potash Leadership](#).

⁶⁰ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 26, 2025 (The Honourable Lisa Raitt).

⁶¹ National Maritime Group, [brief](#).

⁶² TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 5, 2025 (Jasmin Guénette, Vice-President, National Affairs, Canadian Federation of Independent Business).

- contractual penalties for delivery delays; and
- reduced production and employee working hours.⁶³

In the industrial chemicals sector, more than 85% of chemicals and plastics are shipped by rail.⁶⁴ These products are distributed to companies in food manufacturing, mining, forestry, automotive manufacturing, energy, metal refining and defence. When the transport of chemicals is interrupted, these companies must suspend their operations, according to the CIAC.⁶⁵

Some of these chemicals are used in wastewater treatment and the day-to-day operation of drinking water infrastructure. In a brief submitted to the committee, Toronto Water explained how municipalities rely heavily on this supply for drinking water treatment:

For drinking water production, chemicals such as aluminum sulphate, polyaluminum chloride, chlorine, and phosphoric acid are essential to meet regulatory requirements and ensure water is safe for public consumption. In most cases, there are no alternative treatment options that can readily be implemented if these chemicals are unavailable.⁶⁶

Kemira Water Solutions Canada believes that “any disruption to the supply of water treatment chemicals compromises the integrity of clean water systems and introduces direct and preventable risks to public safety.”⁶⁷

Canada’s Reputation as a Reliable Trading Partner

In some of these decisions, the CIRB has acknowledged that a work stoppage in the transportation sector could harm Canada’s trade and reputation. However, these factors are not taken into account by the CIRB when rendering a decision under section 87.4 of the *Canada Labour Code* regarding the maintenance of activities in the event of a work stoppage:

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 5, 2025 (Greg Moffatt).

⁶⁵ Chemistry Industry Association of Canada, *brief*.

⁶⁶ City of Toronto, *brief*.

⁶⁷ Kemira Water Solutions Canada, *brief*.

There is no doubt that a work stoppage at CN would result in inconvenience, economic hardship and, possibly, as some groups and organizations have suggested, harm to Canada’s global reputation as a reliable trading partner. While such possible harm is by no means insignificant, these are not factors that are to be considered by the Board when addressing a referral under section 87.4 of the Code.⁶⁸

Regarding Canada’s trade reputation, Tamara Rudge, Director General, Surface Transportation Policy with Transport Canada, said the following:

[S]omething that’s hard about these threats of labour disruption is there is a view from the customer side and our trading reputation that it is something we can prevent. When there is an atmospheric river, I think although customers are still frustrated and it has that same impact of closing down our supply chains, on the labour side there is an impression — and what we’re told by shippers — that this is very specific to Canada in a more continuous way and affects our ability to be a reliable trading partner.⁶⁹

Representatives of rail companies and the associations that represent them commented on the impact of labour disputes on Canada’s reputation. According to Mr. Cato of CPKC, the country’s reputation is “damaged” when its supply chains grind to a halt due to recurring labour disruptions.⁷⁰ CN’s Assistant Vice-President of Labour Relations, Stephanie McGuire, said that Canada must modernize its collective bargaining framework, as work stoppages threaten “productivity and Canada’s reputation.”⁷¹ According to the RAC, the work stoppages of 2023 and 2024 had “immediate impacts on workers, communities, businesses, and Canada’s reputation as a reliable trading partner.”⁷²

Witnesses from the marine sector made similar comments. According to the National Maritime Group,⁷³ the successive work stoppages do not portray Canada as

⁶⁸ [Canadian National Railway Company](#), 2024 CIRB 1154, para. 98.

⁶⁹ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 28, 2025 (Tamara Rudge, Director General, Surface Transportation Policy, Transport Canada).

⁷⁰ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 29, 2025 (Nathan Cato).

⁷¹ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 29, 2025 (Stephanie McGuire, Assistant Vice-President, Labour Relations, Canadian National Railway Company).

⁷² Railway Association of Canada, [brief](#).

⁷³ National Maritime Group, [brief](#).

“a reliable destination for international traffic.” This organization argues that Canada’s reputation is “irreparably damaged” when part of this traffic is diverted to other countries. For the Maritime Employers Association (MEA), these disruptions compromise “the industry’s reputation and competitiveness relative to our competitors.”⁷⁴ The British Columbia Maritime Employers Association (BCMEA) and the Western Canadian Shippers’ Coalition made the same observation.⁷⁵

According to the Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association (CIFFA), Canada is at a critical juncture as a credible trading nation. CIFFA states that Canada must as soon as possible establish “a modernized legislative labour framework.”⁷⁶ If such a framework is not implemented, the country will suffer “further economic harm and reputational damage.”

Issues related to Canada’s reputation were also raised by the mining sector. The MAC noted that repeated work stoppages reduce “confidence in Canada as a destination for investment.”⁷⁷

The CIAC is calling on the Government of Canada to recognize that reliable, predictable trade and transportation are essential to Canada’s economy and reputation. According to the CIAC, Canada will not be able to double exports in the coming years because “our reputation is that we can’t keep railways and ports running.”⁷⁸

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) argued that disruptions damage “Canada’s reputation as a reliable exporter.”⁷⁹ It is the reputational impacts that are the “most damaging,” according to the CFA.⁸⁰ Chris Procyk, Vice President of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan, said that the Canadian rail system is viewed as “suspect” by foreign customers.⁸¹

In the grain sector, Canada does not have a reputation as a reliable partner, particularly among durum wheat importers in North Africa.⁸² As for companies in the Canadian meat industry, they spend considerable resources creating and

⁷⁴ Maritime Employers Association, [brief](#).

⁷⁵ Western Canadian Shippers’ Coalition, [brief](#); British Columbia Maritime Employers Association, [brief](#).

⁷⁶ Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association, [brief](#).

⁷⁷ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Geoff Smith).

⁷⁸ Chemistry Industry Association of Canada, [brief](#).

⁷⁹ Ontario Federation of Agriculture, [brief](#).

⁸⁰ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 18, 2025 (Bill Prybylski).

⁸¹ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 5, 2025 (Chris Procyk).

⁸² TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 18, 2025 (Scott Hepworth).

maintaining relationships with their foreign customers.⁸³ However, these relationships are jeopardized when these companies cannot deliver their products, according to Russ Mallard of the CMC.⁸⁴

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada (ILWU Canada) argued that what is actually contributing indirectly to damaging Canada’s reputation is the Minister of Labour’s repeated use of section 107, which results in “[p]rolonged uncertainty, imperfect and precarious collective agreements and, ironically, harms to Canada’s trading reputation.”⁸⁵

The Right to Strike

During the study, unions and other witnesses stressed to the committee that the Supreme Court of Canada’s 2015 decision in *Saskatchewan Federation of Labour* recognized that the right to strike is protected by the Canadian Constitution.⁸⁶ The Court held that legislation interfering with the right to strike infringes section 2(d) of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, which guarantees freedom of association, when it amounts to a “substantial interference” with collective bargaining.⁸⁷ Witnesses emphasized, however, that in its decision, the Court also held that this right was not absolute,⁸⁸ but rather should be restricted as little as possible.

Paul Champ, a lawyer with Champ and Associates, as an individual, said that “[w]orkers don’t want to go on strike,” be off work or stop receiving a paycheque, but they sometimes must do it to improve their conditions of employment.⁸⁹ In the same vein, CLC President Bea Bruske added:

⁸³ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 18, 2025 (Russ Mallard).

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 4, 2025 (Tom Doran, First Vice-President, International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada).

⁸⁶ TRCM, *Evidence*, March 11, 2026 (The Honourable Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Employment and Social Development Canada); *Evidence*, October 28, 2025 (Paul Champ, Lawyer, Champ & Associates, As an individual); *Evidence* October 29, 2025 (Barry Eidlin, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, McGill University, As an individual); *Evidence*, November 4, 2025 (Bea Bruske); David Doorey, *brief*.

⁸⁷ Mayra Perez-Leclerc, “[Constitutional Protection of the Right to Strike](#),” Hill Notes, Library of Parliament, October 7, 2025.

⁸⁸ TRCM, *Evidence*, October 29, 2025 (Nathan Cato), (Derrick Hynes, Chief Executive Officer, National Maritime Group); *Evidence*, October 28, 2025 (Professor Ian Lee); *Evidence*, November 4, 2025 (Michael Bourque).

⁸⁹ TRCM, *Evidence*, October 28, 2025 (Paul Champ).

They [the workers] have the right to inflict some economic harm directly on their employer and, yes, sometimes indirectly on third parties which do business with their employer.⁹⁰

According to Mr. Champ, recent strikes could be attributed to the inflation that Canada has experienced in recent years.⁹¹ He explained that unions are trying to negotiate so they can “at least keep the cost-of-living increase” or more. In order to improve their working conditions and ensure they are not working for increasingly lower wages year after year, striking is sometimes the only option. In a similar vein, Barry Eidlin, an associate professor in the Department of Sociology at McGill University who appeared as an individual, said that “[i]t is the threat of disruption that creates a pressure-cooker environment that creates the conditions necessary to bring parties together to reach agreement.”⁹²

Mr. Harvey stated that the Canadian rail industry agrees that employees should be well paid, noting that they receive “higher wages than the Canadian average.”⁹³ According to data from Statistics Canada, in 2025, employees from the “rail transportation” sector had an average weekly wage rate of \$1,938.64, while employees in the “water transportation” sector had an average weekly wage rate of \$1,811.18. The average weekly wage rate for all industries in Canada, as per the North American Industry Classification System, was \$1,329.77.⁹⁴

In addition to pay, witnesses raised other issues that could contribute to labour disputes, such as the impact of artificial intelligence and automation on the workforce and job security⁹⁵ and fatigue management (rest periods).⁹⁶ Regarding fatigue, Paul Boucher, President of the Teamsters Canada Railway Conference (TCRC) made the following statement:

⁹⁰ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Bea Bruske).

⁹¹ Statistics Canada, “[Price trends: 1914 to today](#),” database, accessed April 24, 2026.

⁹² TRCM, [Evidence](#) October 29, 2025 (Professor Barry Eidlin).

⁹³ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 29, 2025 (Eric Harvey).

⁹⁴ “[Rail transportation](#)” corresponds to code 482 in the North American Industry Classification System 2022, and “[water transportation](#)” to code 483. “Water transportation” includes deep sea, coastal and Great Lakes water transportation, as well as inland water transportation. Statistics Canada, “0426_10 Table 1 - Average and median hourly and weekly wage rates for employed employees by selected industries, North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) 2022, Canada, annual average, 2025 (persons x 1,000 unless otherwise specified),” Data shared with the Library of Parliament on 6 May 2026.

⁹⁵ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 26, 2025 (The Honourable Lisa Raitt); [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Pam Schwann), (Bea Bruske).

⁹⁶ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Paul Boucher, President, Teamsters Canada Rail Conference), (Me Ken Stuebing, Partner, CaleyWray, Teamsters Canada Rail Conference).

Fatigue is a critical safety issue for employees and for the public. Running trades employees of CN and CPKC have experienced a systemic failure to respect employees' rest rights under the collective agreements.⁹⁷

Mr. Boucher also argued that wages and a handful of safety issues are all that get resolved at dispute arbitration, suggesting that the biggest issues remain unresolved and are only addressed through a negotiated agreement.⁹⁸ Mr. Boucher added:

With the evolving world as it is, there are always going to be issues at the bargaining table. The common theme that needs to happen here is that you have to have both parties bargaining in good faith.⁹⁹

During the study, the lack of transparency in the collective bargaining process was also discussed; the confidentiality of negotiations makes it impossible to know what the key issues are. Mr. Hepworth and CFA Director Bill Prybylski both felt that greater transparency regarding the root causes of work stoppages might lead to a more proactive approach to seeking lasting solutions to labour disputes.¹⁰⁰

The Honourable Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, said that “unionization is an important part of how we build a healthy middle class,” adding that “unions protect wages. They protect workers from harm. They insist on safe workplaces.”¹⁰¹ Ms. Raitt also stated that although unions are often blamed for work stoppages in Canada, “[t]he actual history of these work stoppages shows that it’s lockouts by the companies that have precipitated the biggest ones recently.”¹⁰² According to Ms. Raitt, more effort must be devoted to labour stability in Canada, and these efforts must be ongoing, not limited to bargaining periods.

⁹⁷ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Paul Boucher).

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 18, 2025 (Bill Prybylski), (Scott Hepworth).

¹⁰¹ TRCM, [Evidence](#), March 11, 2026 (The Honourable Patty Hajdu).

¹⁰² TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 26, 2025 (The Honourable Lisa Raitt).

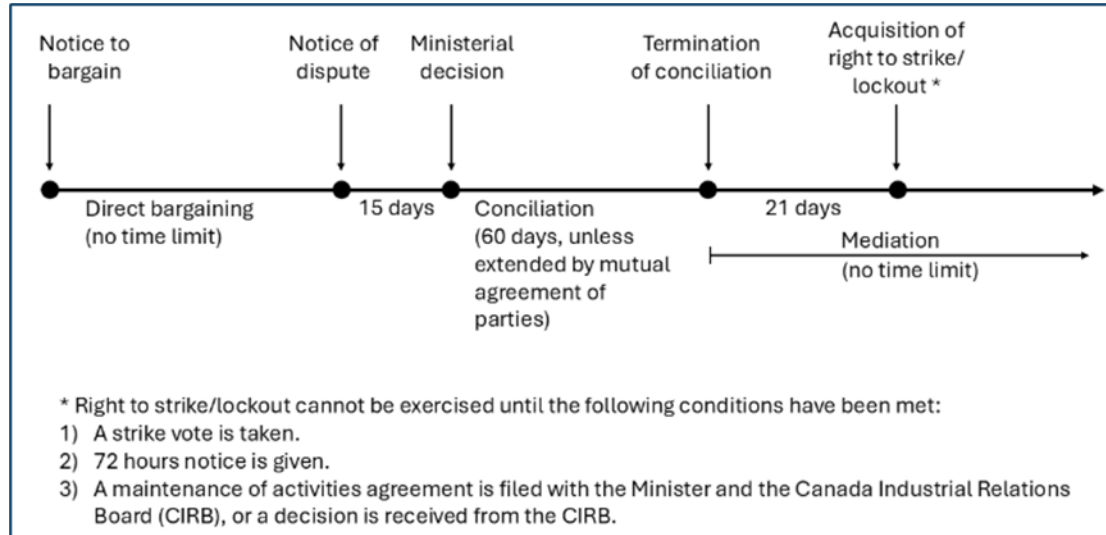
Collective Bargaining and Interventions

Industrial relations for federally regulated businesses are governed by Part I of the *Canada Labour Code*. Parts II, III, and IV deal respectively with health and safety, regular hours of work, wages, leave and statutory holidays and, lastly, administrative monetary penalties.

Part I of the *Canada Labour Code*

As part of its study, the committee focused on certain provisions in Part I concerning the maintenance of activities and the return to work. Figure 2 outlines the stages of the collective bargaining process.

Figure 2 – Collective Bargaining Process –*Canada Labour Code*, Part I



Source: Employment and Social Development Canada, [*Collective Bargaining – Labour Program*](#).

Under the *Canada Labour Code*, the parties must, no later than 15 days after the day on which notice to bargain collectively has been given, enter into an agreement regarding the activities that will be maintained in the event of a work stoppage (subsection 87.4(2)). This agreement must be filed with the CIRB and the Minister of Labour and has the same effect as an order of the CIRB (subsection 87.4(3)). In the absence of an agreement, the parties may request that the CIRB determine which activities are to be maintained (subsection 87.4(4)). The requirements regarding the maintenance of activities are set forth in subsection 87.4(1) of the *Canada Labour Code*:

87.4 (1) During a strike or lockout not prohibited by this Part, the employer, the trade union and the employees in the bargaining unit must continue the supply of services, operation of facilities or production of goods to the extent necessary to prevent an immediate and serious danger to the safety or health of the public.¹⁰³

According to Mr. Doran, the port services activities that are maintained generally include the following:

moving cruise passengers safely through terminals, checking refrigerated containers so goods do not spoil and maintaining core harbour safety and emergency response.¹⁰⁴

The *Canada Labour Code* includes a specific provision regarding the maintenance of certain grain transportation activities:

*87.7 (1) During a strike or lockout not prohibited by this Part, an employer in the long-shoring industry, or other industry included in paragraph (a) of the definition **federal work, undertaking or business** in section 2, its employees and their bargaining agent shall continue to provide the services they normally provide to ensure the tie-up, let-go and loading of grain vessels at licensed terminal and transfer elevators, and the movement of the grain vessels in and out of a port.¹⁰⁵*

In its brief, the Government of Saskatchewan explained that while subsection 87.7(1) ensures the maintenance of certain grain-handling activities, it does not guarantee grain transportation throughout the entire supply chain. It added:

¹⁰³ Under subsection 87.4(5) of the *Canada Labour Code*, the Minister of Labour may also refer to the CIRB any question with respect to whether an agreement entered into by the parties is sufficient to ensure that subsection 87.4(1) is complied with.

¹⁰⁴ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 4, 2025 (Tom Doran).

¹⁰⁵ Paragraph 2(a) of the *Canada Labour Code* states that a “federal work, undertaking or business” is any work, undertaking or business that is within the legislative authority of Parliament, including “a work, undertaking or business operated or carried on for or in connection with navigation and shipping, whether inland or maritime, including the operation of ships and transportation by ship anywhere in Canada.”

*Given that it is not practical to maintain grain loading of vessels at the port without the supply of grain being provided by the railways, it is not logical to require one piece of the supply chain to maintain operations and not the others.*¹⁰⁶

As shown in Figure 2, several conditions must be met before the parties can resort to a work stoppage. In the event of an impasse in negotiations, a notice of dispute is filed with the Minister of Labour (subsection 71(1)), and the Minister may appoint a conciliation officer within fifteen days (subsection 72(1)). Following conciliation comes a 21-day cooling off period, and it is at the end of these 21 days that the parties acquire the right to strike or lockout. At any time, the Minister can appoint a mediator to assist the parties in reaching an agreement (subsection 105(1)).

Minister Hajdu explained that since the best agreements are those reached at the bargaining table, the Government of Canada is focusing “hard on early intervention with parties, through the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS).”¹⁰⁷ She added that the FMCS intervenes early on in the process if that is what the parties want and that, during the last fiscal year, the FMCS mediation team supported over 200 collective bargaining negotiations, 97% of which were resolved without a work stoppage. The Minister also stated that she is available to meet with the parties during the negotiation process if they wish.

In a letter sent to the committee, the Minister explained that the FMCS will be engaging soon with unions and employers operating in key sectors of the supply chains whose collective agreement are set to expire to “offer support and encourage them to work with federal mediators on an early renewal process.”¹⁰⁸

In the event of a work stoppage, if the Minister of Labour wants to put an end to it, the Minister may do so by enacting back-to-work legislation or invoking section 107.

¹⁰⁶ Government of Saskatchewan, *brief*.

¹⁰⁷ TRCM, *Evidence*, March 11, 2026 (The Honourable Patty Hajdu).

¹⁰⁸ The Honourable Patty Hajdu, *brief*.

107 The Minister, where the Minister deems it expedient, may do such things as to the Minister seem likely to maintain or secure industrial peace and to promote conditions favourable to the settlement of industrial disputes or differences and to those ends the Minister may refer any question to the Board or direct the Board to do such things as the Minister deems necessary.

Section 107 allows the Minister to refer any question to the CIRB or direct the CIRB to do such things as the Minister deems necessary. In practice, this often results in a return to work.

Subsection 90(1) of the *Canada Labour Code* also allows for the suspension of a work stoppage in the event of a dissolution of Parliament.

90 (1) Where a strike or lockout not prohibited by this Part occurs or may occur during the time commencing on the date of a dissolution of Parliament and ending on the date fixed for the return of the writs at the next following general election and, in the opinion of the Governor in Council, adversely affects or would adversely affect the national interest, the Governor in Council may during that time make an order deferring the strike or lockout during the period commencing on the day the order is made and ending on the twenty-first day following the date fixed for the return of the writs.

Minister Hajdu defined her role as Minister of Labour as follows:

I believe that as a government and as a labour minister, in particular, the work that I do as the labour minister is about supporting the stability of our supply chains, with maintaining meaningful collective bargaining and also respecting workers' fundamental right to strike, which is, as you know, contained within our Charter rights.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ TRCM, *Evidence*, March 11, 2026 (The Honourable Patty Hajdu).

Interventions by the Canada Industrial Relations Board and the Government of Canada

The CIRB is an independent, quasi-judicial tribunal whose mandate is “to contribute to, and promote, a harmonious industrial relations climate in the federally regulated sector.”¹¹⁰ CIRB Chairperson Maryse Tremblay appeared before the committee to explain how the Board operates. Ms. Tremblay noted that the CIRB exercises its powers free from any external influence. By its very nature, the CIRB Chairperson cannot therefore adjudicate on certain issues relating to sections 87.4 or 107 of the Code.¹¹¹

Section 87.4: Its Scope and Interpretation by the Canada Industrial Relations Board

In 2024, the CIRB issued several decisions under section 87.4. Witnesses cited some of these decisions during their appearances. The following are some examples:

- CPKC and TCRC ([2024 CIRB 1153](#));
- CN and TCRC ([2024 CIRB 1154](#)); and
- MEA and Syndicat des débardeurs, Local 375 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees ([2024 CIRB 1147](#)).

Lawyers specializing in labour law weighed in on the scope of section 87.4 and its interpretation by the CIRB. According to Mr. Champ, CIRB jurisprudence shows that it favours a narrow interpretation of this section, which does not include shielding the public from “economic consequences” or “personal difficulties.”¹¹²

This view was shared by Christopher D. Pigott, Partner at Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP. According to Mr. Pigott, the CIRB found on several occasions that section 87.4 does not apply “where the risk is to the economic well-being and financial stability of Canada or the national supply chain.”¹¹³ Mr. Pigott noted that applying the maintenance of activities provisions under section 87.4 posed two problems:

¹¹⁰ Canada Industrial Relations Board, *Annual Report 2023-2024*, p. 12.

¹¹¹ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 19, 2025 (Maryse Tremblay, Chairperson, Canada Industrial Relations Board).

¹¹² TRCM, *Evidence*, October 28, 2025 (Paul Champ).

¹¹³ TRCM, *Evidence*, October 29, 2025 (Christopher D. Pigott, Partner, Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP).

- Employers and unions are almost never able to agree on which services must be maintained during a work stoppage. It is up to the CIRB to resolve disputes. The parties must back up their positions with extensive evidence, and it may take the CIRB months, if not years to render a decision.
- Even where the parties or the CIRB identify certain activities as essential, it is difficult to determine how to maintain these services and which employees must provide them.¹¹⁴

Expertise and Delays

Witnesses questioned the CIRB’s expertise in ruling on matters related to public health and safety, essential services or supply chain impacts. The MEA wrote the following in its brief:

*The CIRB is not the appropriate authority to rule on matters affecting public health and safety or the public interest. It does not have the necessary tools to assess issues related to essential services.*¹¹⁵

The MEA suggested empowering a body with the necessary expertise in protecting the public interest, “such as the Federal Court,” to rule on public health and safety matters.¹¹⁶ Specialized judges could be designated to hear these cases. The CPA expressed support for the CIRB seeking expert assistance in rendering its decisions.¹¹⁷

For its part, the United Steelworkers believes that the CIRB has the specialized knowledge and experience necessary to review, confirm, modify or rescind any order or agreement related to the maintenance of activities during a work stoppage.¹¹⁸ Ms. Tremblay pointed out that the *Canada Labour Code* contains a provision stipulating that the CIRB Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons must have experience and expertise in industrial relations.¹¹⁹ However, there are no specific

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Maritime Employers Association, *brief*.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 19, 2025 (Katie Kachur).

¹¹⁸ United Steelworkers, *brief*.

¹¹⁹ *Canada Labour Code*, R.S.C., 1985, c. L-2, subs. 10(5).

requirements regarding a particular sector of activity, such as supply chain experience.”¹²⁰

Witnesses also expressed concerns about how long it takes the CIRB to render decisions under section 87.4 when the parties cannot agree on which activities should be maintained in the event of a work stoppage. John Corey, President of the Freight Management Association of Canada (FMA), cited a three-month delay in obtaining a decision in summer 2024, which, in his view, “only prolonged the uncertainty.”¹²¹

Ms. Tremblay provided the committee with some explanations for the time taken in certain cases referred to the CIRB:

*I can say that we have limited resources, like many government institutions. That’s when we have time lags, or however people interpret the time that it takes to render decisions — it could be for various reasons. Sometimes, the evidence that needs to be looked at is highly complex. We have a limited number of decision makers and we have a limited number of staff to assist the decision makers, as well.*¹²²

The recent invocations of section 107 by ministers of Labour have increased the CIRB’s workload, according to Ms. Tremblay. CFFA recommended enhancing CIRB capacity with stable funding and staffing to ensure timely and effective mediation.¹²³

Section 107: Comments by Witnesses on Its Use

Between 1984 and 2024, section 107 was used “sparingly” by successive ministers of Labour.¹²⁴ However, between June 2024 and August 2025, eight ministerial referrals were made under this section, including:

- CN and TCRC ([2024 CIRB 1162](#));
- CPKC and TCRC ([2024 CIRB 1162](#));

¹²⁰ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 19, 2025 (Maryse Tremblay).

¹²¹ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (John Corey, President, Freight Management Association of Canada).

¹²² TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 19, 2025 (Maryse Tremblay).

¹²³ Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association, [brief](#).

¹²⁴ [Canadian National Railway Company](#), 2024 CIRB 1162, para. 43.

- BCMEA and ILWU, Local 514 ([2025 CIRB 1193](#));
- MEA and Syndicat des débardeurs, Local 375 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Port of Montreal (*Reasons for decision pending*); and
- Société des Arrimeurs de Québec Inc. and Syndicat des débardeurs du Port de Québec, Local 2614 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (*Reasons for decision pending*).

Witnesses expressed varying opinions on the appropriateness, scope and legality of a minister requesting the CIRB to intervene in a labour dispute by invoking section 107. According to Mr. Champ, section 107 is inconsistent with the “principle of legality,” which requires that the rules of law be known “ahead of time.”¹²⁵ Unions face uncertainty in that they cannot predict when this section will be invoked. Mr. Champ also expressed doubts about the legality of section 107:

In my legal opinion — I’ll offer it here for free — I think a court isn’t going to even have to resort to the Constitution. The court isn’t going to have to say it’s unconstitutional. I think a court will conclude that section 107 wasn’t passed for that purpose. It wasn’t meant to be so sweeping as an open invitation for the minister to do whatever he or she wants to end a strike.¹²⁶

For Professor Lee, the repeated use of section 107 is an “autocratic” decision that “bypasses Parliament.”¹²⁷ In recent years, ministers of Labour have preferred to invoke the discretionary powers granted to them under section 107 of the *Canada Labour Code* rather than invoking back-to-work legislation. Such legislation requires governments to have a public debate, according to Mr. Champ.¹²⁸ This view is shared by the United Steelworkers and the CLC, who consider that back-to-work legislation is more democratic insofar as it must be debated in Parliament.¹²⁹

According to Professor Eidlin, restricting workers’ right to strike through back-to-work orders is “an ineffective means to achieve industrial peace.”¹³⁰ Unions are also critical of the use of section 107. According to the First Vice-President of ILWU Canada, the repeated use of section 107 by ministers of Labour is “troubling.”¹³¹ In

¹²⁵ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 28, 2025 (Paul Champ).

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 28, 2025 (Professor Ian Lee).

¹²⁸ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 28, 2025 (Paul Champ).

¹²⁹ United Steelworkers, [brief](#); TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Bea Bruske).

¹³⁰ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 29, 2025 (Professor Barry Eidlin).

¹³¹ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Tom Doran).

its brief, the union explained the consequences of its repeated use on the collective bargaining process:

From a labour relations perspective, the most important consequence is the incentive change. If employers and unions come to believe that major disputes will predictably be removed from the bargaining table and handed to arbitration through ministerial action, the system moves away from negotiated settlement and toward strategic escalation.¹³²

The United Steelworkers argues that the repeated use of section 107 does not produce healthy labour relations or bargaining relationships in the long term. Rather, it is “[a] counterproductive circumvention and interference in the constitutional right of workers and unions to bargain collectively.”¹³³ For the BCFMWU, section 107 is an emergency mechanism and not “a bargaining tool.”¹³⁴

The TCRC was also critical of the Minister of Labour, who in August 2024 asked the CIRB to end the work stoppages and impose final and binding arbitration to settle the terms and conditions of the agreements between CN, CPKC and the employees represented by the TCRC. Its president, Paul Boucher, said the following:

The recent usage of section 107 has emboldened federally regulated employers and threatens to perpetuate surface bargaining. CN and CPKC colluded to create an artificial crisis, prompting the government minister to use section 107 to undermine the rights of workers and to reward the companies for failing to bargain in good faith.¹³⁵

The Montreal Port Authority expressed support for maintaining an “exceptional use of section 107.”¹³⁶ The National Maritime Group also believes that this section should only be used in “extraordinary circumstances.”¹³⁷

For its part, the Government of Saskatchewan welcomes the federal government’s recent use of section 107 “to end strikes, stop lockouts, and impose binding

¹³² International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada, [brief](#).

¹³³ United Steelworkers, [brief](#).

¹³⁴ BC Ferry and Marine Workers’ Union, [brief](#).

¹³⁵ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Paul Boucher).

¹³⁶ Montreal Port Authority, [brief](#).

¹³⁷ National Maritime Group, [brief](#).

arbitration.” However, it would be preferable for the federal government to clarify its scope in order to improve “legal certainty and administrative guidance.”¹³⁸

In the OFA’s view, invoking section 107 is a reactive measure that does not address the root causes of labour disputes.¹³⁹

Modernizing the Collective Bargaining Process

Witnesses proposed various solutions aimed at making Canada’s supply chains more reliable. While the vast majority of witnesses agreed that the best collective agreements are the ones reached at the bargaining table, some said that the current bargaining process lacked incentives to achieve this and needed to be modernized. Mr. Harvey assured the committee that the rail sector supported collective bargaining and negotiated agreements, but that:

*Canada needs a balanced and effective labour dispute resolution system that ensures stability and predictability for our supply chains and the customers who depend on them. The current regime does not achieve that.*¹⁴⁰

Derrick Hynes, Chief Executive Officer of the National Maritime Group, said that while employers seek to negotiate freely and fairly with unions, there is a need to “find tools that keep the parties at the bargaining table.”¹⁴¹ Other witnesses spoke of seeking to strike a balance between workers’ rights and the public or national interest.¹⁴² Bridgitte Anderson, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade, made the following comment:

¹³⁸ Government of Saskatchewan, [brief](#).

¹³⁹ Ontario Federation of Agriculture, [brief](#).

¹⁴⁰ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 29, 2025 (Eric Harvey).

¹⁴¹ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 29, 2025 (Derrick Hynes).

¹⁴² TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 29, 2025 (Stephanie McGuire); [Evidence](#), November 19, 2025 (Katie Kachur); [Evidence](#), November 5, 2025 (Greg Moffatt); [Evidence](#), November 18, 2025 (Bill Prybylski), (Lauren Martin, Senior Director, Public Affairs and Corporate Counsel, Canadian Meat Council).

*The best way to get a deal is at the table, but if that can't happen then priority must be given to the economy, our supply chains and getting things moving, as well as our reputation as a trading partner.*¹⁴³

Several witnesses suggested that consultations be held between the federal government, unions, employers and the companies involved to discuss the future of collective bargaining. Minister Hajdu told the Committee that the day after her appearance, she would be attending a tripartite meeting with FETCO, the CLC and other union movement representatives.¹⁴⁴ Mr. Foss argued that any maintenance of activities framework or legislation must include an Indigenous economic lens. He therefore recommended tripartite consultations involving the federal government, unions and Indigenous representatives.¹⁴⁵

In its brief, the CLC challenged the concept of “national interest,” asking what exactly that encompasses. It made the following recommendation to the Committee:

*In the CLC's view, Senators should dismiss the suggestion that transportation company interests are coextensive with the national interest, while unions stand accused of “holding Canadians hostage” when they pursue their legitimate workplace objectives. Rather, we encourage the committee to inquire into the underlying frustrations with job quality, work organization, and work intensification that have mounted over time.*¹⁴⁶

Ms. Bruske called on the Committee to “vindicate collective bargaining and the Charter right to strike.”¹⁴⁷ According to Mr. Champ, the current system works well, and Mr. Boucher said that “there’s nothing wrong with the Code as it is. You have the economic pressure on both parties.”¹⁴⁸

¹⁴³ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 5, 2025 (Bridgitte Anderson).

¹⁴⁴ TRCM, [Evidence](#), March 11, 2026 (The Honourable Patty Hajdu). On April 17, 2026, Employment and Social Development Canada [announced](#) that it would be holding “consultations to strengthen labour relations and better support workers.”

¹⁴⁵ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 5, 2025 (Matthew Foss).

¹⁴⁶ Canadian Labour Congress, [brief](#).

¹⁴⁷ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Bea Bruske).

¹⁴⁸ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Paul Boucher); [Evidence](#), October 28, 2025 (Paul Champ).

Maintenance of Activities

Witnesses recommended to the committee that the wording of section 87.4 be revisited to include the impact of a work stoppage in the rail and marine sectors on Canada's economy. Other witnesses also suggested amending the *Canada Labour Code* to ensure that specific activities or goods are maintained in the event of a work stoppage.

Economic Harm

The Retail Council of Canada stated that the reference to immediate and serious danger to the safety or health of the public in section 87.4 of the *Code* should be interpreted with recognition of Canada's unique "vulnerabilities," including the transportation of food and medicine to remote communities. The Council considers that food, medicine, and remote community access should be "explicitly recognized as essential."¹⁴⁹

In a brief, the Government of Saskatchewan, wrote that section 87.4 should be interpreted in a way that considers "the economic impact of labour disruptions in Canada's rail and marine sectors."¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, the Government of Saskatchewan believes there is a "strong case" for revisiting and modernizing the definition of activities that must be maintained during a labour dispute.¹⁵¹

The MEA believes it is "imperative" that economic considerations be taken into account in determining whether to maintain activities under section 87.4.¹⁵² The MEA recommended that the *Code* include a descriptive list setting out the economic considerations:

*Parliament could instead adopt a more targeted solution by providing for exceptions within the Code itself that are specific to rail and port services, the interruption of which inherently carries devastating consequences for the public, both directly and indirectly, in terms of the economy, health and safety.*¹⁵³

According to Katie Kachur, CPA Vice-President of Government Relations for the West, economic impacts should be considered in the *Code* "alongside public health,

¹⁴⁹ Retail Council of Canada, *brief*.

¹⁵⁰ Government of Saskatchewan, *brief*.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*.

¹⁵² Maritime Employers Association, *brief*.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*.

safety and security considerations.”¹⁵⁴ Ms. Kachur and Mr. Schick also expressed support for removing the term “immediate” from section 87.4, given that the level of risk can vary depending on the type of goods, which may be immediate, within a few hours, or within a few days.¹⁵⁵ Mr. Prybylski also argued that removing the word “immediate” would provide more latitude in determining which activities to maintain, with food safety perhaps being considered.¹⁵⁶

Without calling for the wording of section 87.4 to be revisited, the Montreal Port Authority lent its support to establishing a clear and predictable framework to guide the interpretation of the concept of immediate and serious danger to the safety or health of the public.¹⁵⁷

Christina Santini, Director of National Affairs at the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), also said that she supports making economic harm a consideration in the scope of the *Canada Labour Code*.¹⁵⁸ According to the Vice-President of National Affairs at the CFIB, Jasmin Gu nette, there may be smaller-scale strikes, but “a general strike that would paralyze the entire economy should not be allowed.”¹⁵⁹

The unions that took part in the study believe that the interpretation of section 87.4 should be limited to immediate and serious dangers to the safety or health of the public. ILWU Canada opposes a broader interpretation or new wording of section 87.4 of the *Code* that would expand to include “generalized economic harm or reputational harm to Canada as a trading partner.”¹⁶⁰ According to this union, it is clear that the current wording of this section does not establish any economic criteria to be considered. Furthermore, seeking to change its interpretation would amount to “a back-to-work order” that “would render a strike meaningless,” according to its First Vice-President, Tom Doran.¹⁶¹

The TCRC shares this interpretation and argues that it is well established “that the railway freight companies do not offer essential services within the meaning of section 87.4 of the *Canada Labour Code*.”¹⁶² According to its president, Paul Boucher, the decisions rendered by the CIRB are proof of this. Furthermore, the TCRC believes that there is no urgent need to revisit the *Code* in light of the

¹⁵⁴ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 19, 2025 (Katie Kachur).

¹⁵⁵ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 19, 2025 (David Schick).

¹⁵⁶ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 18, 2025 (Bill Prybylski).

¹⁵⁷ TRCM, *Evidence*, October 29, 2025 (Julie Gascon).

¹⁵⁸ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 5, 2025 (Christina Santini, Director, National Affairs, Canadian Federation of Independent Business).

¹⁵⁹ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 5, 2025 (Jasmin Gu nette).

¹⁶⁰ International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada, *brief*.

¹⁶¹ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 4, 2025 (Tom Doran).

¹⁶² TRCM, *Evidence*, November 4, 2025 (Paul Boucher).

maintenance of essential activities agreements that have been concluded in the past between employers and unions.

For the United Steelworkers, “[t]he existing dispute resolution processes provide adequate relief,” even though there are “true threats” to the safety of the public related to labour disputes.¹⁶³ As well, the United Steelworkers believes that the current system provides the CIRB with ample opportunity to review the maintenance of essential services “at any time during a work stoppage to ensure that public health and safety is maintained.”¹⁶⁴

The Activities to Be Maintained

Mr. Corey said that he believes it is necessary to “recognize that the supply chain is essential to the Canadian economy.”¹⁶⁵ In his view, rail and port services should be treated as exceptions under the *Canada Labour Code*, and he called on the Government of Canada to develop a supply-chain dispute resolution framework. Kate Sauser, Policy Manager with the Grain Growers of Canada, said that the entire supply chain should also be recognized as essential.¹⁶⁶

For its part, Kemira Canada recommended that “water treatment operations, and the rail-based logistics that sustain them, fall unequivocally within the most critical category of essential services contemplated by section 87.4.”¹⁶⁷ Ms. Kachur recommended that propane and rail transportation be recognized as essential.¹⁶⁸ Mr. Schick also stated that he believes fuels and their transportation should be deemed essential.¹⁶⁹ For his part, Mr. Procyk suggested that the transport of grain to global markets should be deemed essential. He added that section 87.7 should be expanded “to include grain movement throughout the entire rail and port transportation system,” a view shared by Ms. Sauser.¹⁷⁰ Pam Schwann, President of the Saskatchewan Mining Association, called for potash to be treated “similarly to grain and granting it protection under section 87.7,”¹⁷¹ and Ms. Stinka requested that this protection be extended to rail and port services.¹⁷²

¹⁶³ United Steelworkers, *brief*.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid*.

¹⁶⁵ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 4, 2025 (John Corey).

¹⁶⁶ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 18, 2025 (Kate Sauser).

¹⁶⁷ Kemira Water Solutions Canada, *brief*.

¹⁶⁸ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 19, 2025 (Katie Kachur).

¹⁶⁹ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 19, 2025 (David Schick).

¹⁷⁰ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 18, 2025 (Kate Sauser); *Evidence*, November 19, 2025 (David Schick).

¹⁷¹ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 4, 2025 (Pam Schwann).

¹⁷² TRCM, *Evidence*, November 18, 2025 (Natashia Stinka).

The RAC was not persuaded that the rail sector should be designated as an essential service in the *Canada Labour Code*. According to the RAC, such a designation “would not be doing the trick in the sense of really getting into an environment that would support and favour collective bargaining.”¹⁷³ The RAC instead expressed support for establishing a “more predictable and durable framework ... to ensure long-term labour stability in Canada’s supply chains.”

In the same vein, Ms. McGuire also said that CN does not believe that designating railways as an “essential service” is the solution. She added that designating essential goods is not a desirable option either, because “[c]herry-picking commodities to move during a strike is so impractical that it is impossible.”¹⁷⁴

For the BCFMWU, essential service should mean only the daily services needed to protect life, health and public safety.¹⁷⁵ ILWU Canada stated that it rejects “broad commodity list models,” arguing that such lists “risk converting a safety concept into an economic continuity mandate.” Should such a list be implemented, ILWU Canada suggests that it be done transparently, “through legislation with safeguards, not through an expanded reading of [s]ection 87.4.”¹⁷⁶

Preventing a Work Stoppage

Industrial Inquiry Commission on West Coast Ports

On April 22, 2024, the Honourable Seamus O’Regan Jr., P.C., announced the creation of the Industrial Inquiry Commission on West Coast Ports (the Commission). The Commission’s terms of reference were to examine, with the active participation of the parties, the structure and the processes of collective bargaining between the BCMEA and ILWU Canada.

On May 8, 2025, the Commission presented its [report](#) to the Minister of Labour and made seven recommendations:

- Recommendation 1: That the right to strike/lockout be preserved for the longshoring industry in Canada.
- Recommendation 2: That the *Canada Labour Code* be amended to create a new Special Mediator process to enhance the process of free collective bargaining.

¹⁷³ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 29, 2025 (Eric Harvey).

¹⁷⁴ TRCM, [Evidence](#), October 29, 2025 (Stephanie McGuire).

¹⁷⁵ BC Ferry and Marine Workers’ Union, [brief](#).

¹⁷⁶ International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada, [brief](#).

- Recommendation 3: A British Columbia-wide geographic certification (excluding Westshore Terminals and Trigon Pacific Terminals) is the most appropriate bargaining unit for longshore workers.
- Recommendation 4: An appropriate framework for collective bargaining needs to be established.
- Recommendation 5: The parties to the geographic certification should be a council of trade unions comprised of the ILWU Canada longshoring locals with members working for BCMEA members and Local 514.
- Recommendation 6: The government enact legislative changes or new legislation required for a geographic certification.
- Recommendation 7: No changes to the internal governance or decision-making processes of the parties.

Regarding Recommendation 2, the Commission said that having a special mediator would give the federal government a window into what is happening at the bargaining table, improve the parties' bargaining conduct, and increase the likelihood that an agreement can be reached.¹⁷⁷

The Montreal Port Authority argued that Recommendation 2 could apply to ports in eastern Canada.¹⁷⁸ Special mediation would allow the government to intervene early on, before negotiations break down.¹⁷⁹ Martha Hall Findlay, Director of the School of Public Policy at the University of Calgary, also expressed support for imposing "a framework of binding mediation."¹⁸⁰ Like the Montreal Port Authority, Ms. Findlay suggested that this mediation process begin before collective agreements expire.

CN also expressed support for neutral third-party mediation that would "compel parties to remain at the bargaining table."¹⁸¹

The National Maritime Group recommended that the *Canada Labour Code* be amended to include "access to a Special Mediator" when bargaining has bogged down.¹⁸² Although it is not "the silver bullet solution," special mediation would be a step in "the right direction" to keep negotiations going. The Grain Growers of

¹⁷⁷ Industrial Inquiry Commission on West Coast Ports, *Final Report*, May 8, 2025.

¹⁷⁸ TRCM, *Evidence*, October 29, 2025 (Julie Gascon).

¹⁷⁹ Montreal Port Authority, *brief*.

¹⁸⁰ Martha Hall Findlay, *brief*.

¹⁸¹ TRCM, *Evidence*, October 29, 2025 (Stephanie McGuire).

¹⁸² National Maritime Group, *brief*.

Canada and the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade also support amending the *Code* to include special mediator provisions.¹⁸³

Mr. Bibeau argued that Canada should have a mediation process when the parties fail to come to an agreement.

*That special mediator has to advise government and the department that this is the recommendation, and both sides have to understand that this recommendation should or could be enforced by ministerial powers that make a decision on behalf of both parties.*¹⁸⁴

According to Ms. Bruske, despite the fact that “the different unions may have different viewpoints on this, there are already mediation processes available under the CIRB.”¹⁸⁵ The United Steelworkers opposed “introducing additional steps or parties to [the dispute resolution] process.”¹⁸⁶ As for ILWU Canada, they supported “stronger ... mediation.”¹⁸⁷

The Commission’s terms of reference included looking into geographic certification for longshore workers’ unions in B.C.’s West Coast ports. In its report, the Commission made the following observation regarding the current bargaining structure:

*[T]he uncertainty created by the parties’ largely voluntary bargaining structure is not consistent with the need for reliability in Canada’s national supply chain nor with the structure of other ports in Canada nor around the world.*¹⁸⁸

Four of the Commission’s seven recommendations were aimed at establishing a bargaining structure based on geographic certification for Canada’s West Coast ports. For example, Recommendation 3 proposes that a single geographic certification that includes all B.C. ports (except Trigon Pacific Terminals and Westshore Terminals) be “the appropriate unit for bargaining.”¹⁸⁹

¹⁸³ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 5, 2025 (Bridgitte Anderson); Grain Growers of Canada, *brief*.

¹⁸⁴ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 18, 2025 (Marc D. Bibeau).

¹⁸⁵ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 4, 2025 (Bea Bruske).

¹⁸⁶ United Steelworkers, *brief*.

¹⁸⁷ International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada, *brief*.

¹⁸⁸ Industrial Inquiry Commission on West Coast Ports, *Final Report*, May 8, 2025.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*.

The National Maritime Group, the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade, the Shipping Federation of Canada and the BCMEA support the Commission's recommendation 3.¹⁹⁰ For the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, a B.C.-wide geographic certification would provide certainty to bargaining and align "Canada's West Coast" with the rest of the country's ports.¹⁹¹

ILWU Canada does not support geographic certification. First Vice-President Tom Doran believes that this bargaining structure is inconsistent with certain provisions of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*:

*We do not support the creation of a broad geographic certification for a number of reasons. It would require legislation to do so. It would be forcing workers into a collective bargaining structure against their will. We wonder how the commissioners square that with the Charter-protected rights, like freedom of association and the right to belong to the trade union of your choosing.*¹⁹²

U.S. Model

In the United States, labour relations in the rail and air transportation industries are governed by the [*U.S. Railway Labor Act*](#) (RLA). Essentially, when the parties cannot reach an agreement at the bargaining table, they may invoke the services of the National Mediation Board (NMB). The NMB may keep the parties in mediation for as long as necessary if it determines that an agreement is possible; otherwise, it will propose binding arbitration. If this is rejected, a 30-day cooling-off period begins. If no agreement is reached and the NMB determines that the dispute poses a substantial threat to interstate commerce, it notifies the President, who may then create a Presidential Emergency Board (PEB). The PEB has 30 days to investigate and release a report containing non-binding recommendations to the parties. This is followed by another 30-day cooling-off period, after which the parties may engage in a work stoppage.¹⁹³ If necessary, the U.S. Congress may intervene to prevent or end it.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁰ TRCM, [*Evidence*](#), October 29, 2025 (Derrick Hynes); TRCM, [*Evidence*](#), November 5, 2025 (Bridgitte Anderson); Shipping Federation of Canada, [*brief*](#); British Columbia Maritime Employers Association, [*brief*](#).

¹⁹¹ Canadian Chamber of Commerce, [*brief*](#).

¹⁹² TRCM, [*Evidence*](#), November 4, 2025 (Tom Doran).

¹⁹³ United States, Federal Railroad Administration, [*Highlights of the Railway Labor Act \("RLA"\), and the U.S. Department of Transportation's \("DOT"\) Role in RLA Disputes*](#).

¹⁹⁴ United States, Congress, [*The Railway Labor Act and Congressional Action*](#).

Professor Lee argued that the U.S. model was designed to slow down collective bargaining in order to reduce the risk of work stoppages.¹⁹⁵ According to witnesses representing the rail sector, although the process can be lengthy, it is effective in that work stoppages are rare.¹⁹⁶ Some witnesses suggested that Canada look at the collective bargaining process included in the RLA to keep the parties at the table for as long as possible.¹⁹⁷

That said, Chris Roberts, the CLC's National Director of Social and Economic Policy, questioned the effectiveness of the RLA, suggesting that it may not have been as effective for rail employees as it has been for companies.¹⁹⁸ In his brief, Professor Eidlin echoed this view, arguing that importing into Canada a model similar to the RLA, with its negotiations that can be "inordinately long," would be "unlikely to improve the culture of collective bargaining."¹⁹⁹

During her appearance, Minister Hajdu said that the Government of Canada had observed the U.S. model but was not looking at it, since the U.S. "legal landscape is so different and the reality of their shipping industry is so different."²⁰⁰

Imposition of Binding Arbitration

The RAC clearly supported establishing binding arbitration through legislation. The RAC recommended amending the *Canada Labour Code* as follows:

*If the parties are unable to reach an agreement with the special mediator, the Canada Labour Code provides that the government may directly and rapidly impose, via an explicit and purpose-built statutory authority, final binding arbitration when a work stoppage would cause national or disproportionate economic harm.*²⁰¹

The National Maritime Group argued that binding arbitration does not preclude continuing negotiations to reach "a mutually agreeable path."²⁰² It cited the

¹⁹⁵ TRCM, *Evidence*, October 28, 2025 (Professor Ian Lee).

¹⁹⁶ TRCM, *Evidence*, October 29, 2025 (Nathan Cato), (Eric Harvey), (Stephanie McGuire).

¹⁹⁷ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 5, 2025 (Greg Moffatt); *Evidence*, November 18, 2025 (Kate Sauser); *Evidence*, October 28, 2025 (Professor Ian Lee); Government of Saskatchewan, *brief*; Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association, *brief*; Freight Management Association of Canada, *brief*.

¹⁹⁸ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 4, 2025 (Chris Roberts, National Director, Social and Economic Policy, Canadian Labour Congress).

¹⁹⁹ Professor Barry Eidlin, *brief*.

²⁰⁰ TRCM, *Evidence*, March 11, 2026 (The Honourable Patty Hajdu).

²⁰¹ Railway Association of Canada, *brief*.

²⁰² National Maritime Group, *brief*.

example of “a successful resolution of bargaining” between the BCMEA and ILWU Canada in 2023 and 2024. An agreement was reached after “the imposition of binding arbitration by the then Minister of Labour.”²⁰³

The FMA proposed a 90-day labour dispute resolution framework with four distinct stages. Binding arbitration would be the final stage:

- a 30-day mediation period;
- a 30-day review and recommendation period;
- a 15-day cooling off period; and
- a 15-day binding arbitration period.²⁰⁴

The duration of the imposed settlement could be determined by the Minister of Labour. According to the FMA, the advantage of binding arbitration is that it works as an incentive to reach a settlement between the parties.

Fertilizer Canada said it was in favor of implementing a binding arbitration process for the same reasons. Like the FMA, Michael Bourque of Fertilizer Canada argued that binding arbitration would encourage both parties to reach agreements before disruptions occur.²⁰⁵ The CMC, binding arbitration would prevent strikes from “crippling” businesses and the economy.²⁰⁶

According to FETCO, binding arbitration should be a last resort, “not a strategy or a preferred outcome.” FETCO prefers working toward negotiated settlements between the parties, without government intervention:

*Employers want agreements reached through good-faith bargaining. Nobody wants a third party, who may not fully understand the business or the workplace, holding the pen on their collective agreement.*²⁰⁷

The CLC argued that binding arbitration restricts workers’ right to strike. Furthermore, it limits the ability of labour organizations to draw public attention to priorities for workers, such as “the quality and pace of work, health and safety risks

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Freight Management Association of Canada, [brief](#).

²⁰⁵ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 4, 2025 (Michael Bourque).

²⁰⁶ TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 18, 2025 (Russ Mallard).

²⁰⁷ Federally Regulated Employers – Transportation and Communications, [brief](#).

[and] dignity at work.”²⁰⁸ This view was shared by the BC Ferry and Marine Workers’ Union (BCFMWU). It believed that the use of binding arbitration does not resolve workplace issues, such as wages or the safety of ferry employees.²⁰⁹ According to the TCRC, forced arbitration undermines the right to free collective bargaining.

As with the special mediation process, the United Steelworkers did not support the use of binding arbitration. It is a process that delays and compromises “the quality and effectiveness of bargaining.”²¹⁰ Binding arbitration also removes “decision-making responsibilities” from employers and unions.

Mandating a Return to Work

During the committee’s study, a few witnesses briefly referred to section 90 of the *Canada Labour Code*. As noted earlier, it allows Cabinet to suspend a strike or lockout during an election period if it is of the opinion that the dispute would “adversely affect the national interest.”²¹¹ Mr. Guénette and Ms. Raitt expressed support for granting Cabinet a similar power to temporarily suspend a labour dispute while Parliament debates whether or not to enact back-to-work legislation.²¹²

Several witnesses raised the repeated use of section 107 of the *Canada Labour Code* by various ministers of Labour. While the United Steelworkers recommended that this section be repealed, other witnesses proposed various ways to clarify its scope.²¹³

The CIAC argued that section 107 is undefined and that the timelines for invoking it are uncertain.²¹⁴ It recommended amending this section as follows:

*We recommend clarifying section 107, including defining ministerial powers, enumerating dispute settlement options, decision criteria to end disputes, and establishing timelines for government decisions.*²¹⁵

²⁰⁸ Canadian Labour Congress, [brief](#).

²⁰⁹ BC Ferry and Marine Workers’ Union, [brief](#).

²¹⁰ United Steelworkers, [brief](#).

²¹¹ *Canada Labour Code*, R.S.C., 1985, c. L-2, s. 90.

²¹² TRCM, [Evidence](#): November 5, 2025 (Jasmin Guénette); TRCM, [Evidence](#), November 26, 2025 (The Honourable Lisa Raitt).

²¹³ United Steelworkers, [brief](#).

²¹⁴ Chemistry Industry Association of Canada, [brief](#).

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

The Government of Saskatchewan, the CFIB, the FMA and the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade expressed support for keeping section 107 in the *Code*.²¹⁶ However, they recommended that the scope be clarified and that the powers granted to the Minister of Labour be specified.

ILWU Canada recommended adding the following guardrails for section 107:

- Set a higher threshold where the desired effect is to terminate a lawful strike or lockout.
- Provide written reasons explaining why other tools, including mediation and section 87.4 processes, are insufficient.
- Provide procedural fairness protections, including notice to parties, and the opportunity to make submissions.
- Implement transparency measures when section 107 is used in a way that has back-to-work effect.²¹⁷

The WCSC recommended identifying predefined economic thresholds to govern the application of section 107 when labour disputes have the following consequences:

- A gross domestic product (GDP) impact is equal to or greater than 2% of national GDP.
- When the relevant daily goods value is equal to or greater than \$1 billion.²¹⁸

The WCSC also called for a transparent process and enhanced arbitration, citing Norway, Australia and New Zealand as models.

The BCFMWU also recommended modernizing the criteria allowing the Minister of Labour to invoke section 107.²¹⁹ According to the union, this section is not a bargaining tool, but a mechanism of last resort. In addition, the BCFMWU called for unions to be involved in the modernization process.

²¹⁶ TRCM, *Evidence*, November 5, 2025 (Jasmin Gu nette), (Bridgitte Anderson); *Evidence*, November 4, 2025 (John Corey); Government of Saskatchewan, *brief*.

²¹⁷ International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada, *brief*.

²¹⁸ Western Canadian Shippers' Coalition, *brief*.

²¹⁹ BC Ferry and Marine Workers' Union, *brief*.

Conclusion

As part of its study on labour disputes in the federally regulated rail and marine sectors, the committee sought to understand the impact of these disputes on the reliability of Canada's supply chains. To help stabilize labour relations and reduce the frequency of strikes and lockouts, the committee considered whether Canada's collective bargaining process needed to be modernized in terms of maintaining activities, preventing work stoppages and mandating a return to work.

As Canada seeks to boost its overseas exports and diversify its trading partners, the committee believes that maintaining the status quo is not a viable option and that the Government of Canada must adopt measures to ensure greater supply chain reliability.

It is with this in mind that the committee recommends creating a Supply Chain Reliability Act or amending the *Canada Labour Code* in order to establish an alternative dispute resolution process for the marine and rail sectors in Canada when a work stoppage could adversely affect the national interest. The committee also recommends amending sections 87.4 and 107 of the *Canada Labour Code*. The committee believes that these measures will improve the performance of Canada's transportation network and strengthen Canada's reputation as a reliable trading partner.

Appendix A – Witnesses

Tuesday, October 28, 2025

Paul Champ, Lawyer, Champ and Associates, As an individual

Ian Lee, Associate Professor, Sprott School of Business, Carleton University, As an individual

Sonya Read, Director General, Marine Policy, Transport Canada

Tamara Rudge, Director General, Surface Transportation Policy, Transport Canada

Colin Stacey, Director General, Strategy, National Supply Chain Office

Wednesday, October 29, 2025

Nathan Cato, Assistant Vice-President, Government Affairs Canada, Canadian Pacific Kansas City

Christopher D. Pigott, Partner, Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP, Federally Regulated Employers - Transportation and Communications

Barry Eidlin, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, McGill University, As an individual

Marie-Claude Galarneau, Chief Human Resources and Strategy Officer, Montreal Port Authority

Julie Gascon, Chief Executive Officer, Montreal Port Authority

Eric Harvey, President and Chief Executive Officer, Railway Association of Canada

Derrick Hynes, Chief Executive Officer, National Maritime Group

Stephanie McGuire, Assistant Vice-President, Labour Relations, Canadian National Railway Company

Daniel Safayeni, President and Chief Executive Officer, Federally Regulated Employers - Transportation and Communications (FETCO)

Tuesday, November 4, 2025

Don Ashley, National Legislative Director, Teamsters Canada Rail Conference

Paul Boucher, President, Teamsters Canada Rail Conference

Michael Bourque, President and Chief Executive Officer Fertilizer Canada

Bea Bruske, President, Canadian Labour Congress

John Corey, President, Freight Management Association of Canada

Tom Doran, First Vice-President, International Longshore and Warehouse Union - Canada

Chris Roberts, National Director, Social and Economic Policy, Canadian Labour Congress

Pam Schwann, President, Saskatchewan Mining Association Mining Association of Canada

Geoff Smith, Vice President, Government Relations, Mining Association of Canada

Ken Stuebing, Partner, CaleyWray, Teamsters Canada Rail Conference

Wednesday, November 5, 2025

Bridgitte Anderson, President and Chief Executive Officer, Greater Vancouver Board of Trade

Matthew Foss, Vice-President, Research and Public Policy, Canadian Council for Indigenous Business

Jasmin Guénette, Vice-President, National Affairs, Canadian Federation of Independent Business

Rachel Mackenzie, Director, Communications and Government Relations, Western Canadian Short Line Railway Association

Greg Moffatt, President and Chief Executive Officer, Chemistry Industry Association of Canada

Chris Procyk, Vice President, Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan

Christina Santini, Director, National Affairs, Canadian Federation of Independent Business

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

Marc D. Bibeau, Executive Chairman, OEC Overseas Express Consolidators Inc.

Scott Hepworth, Chair, Grain Growers of Canada

Russ Mallard, Chair, Canadian Meat Council

Lauren Martin, Senior Director, Public Affairs and Corporate Counsel, Canadian Meat Council

Bill Prybylski, Director, Canadian Federation of Agriculture

Kate Sauser, Policy Manager, Grain Growers of Canada

Natashia Stinka, Director, Public Affairs, Canpotex

Wednesday, November 19, 2025

Katie Kachur, Vice-President, Government Relations, West, Canadian Propane Association

David Schick, Vice-President, Western Canada, Innovation and Regulatory Affairs, Canadian Fuels Association

Maryse Tremblay, Chairperson, Canada Industrial Relations Board

Tuesday, November 26, 2025

The Honourable Lisa Raitt, P.C., Co-Chair, Coalition for a Better Future and Vice-Chair, Global Investment Banking, CIBC Capital Markets, As an individual

Wednesday, March 11, 2026

The Honourable Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P., Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Employment and Social Development Canada

Gary Robertson, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister Policy, Dispute Resolution and International Affairs, Labour Program, Employment and Social Development Canada

Rob Wright, Deputy Minister of Labour and Associate Deputy Minister of Employment and Social Development, Employment and Social Development Canada

Appendix B – Briefs and Other Documents

The Committee received the following briefs during its study:

[Brief](#) from Barry Eidlin, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, McGill University

[Brief](#) from Public Safety Canada

[Brief](#) from the Government of Saskatchewan

[Brief](#) from the Western Canadian Shippers' Coalition

[Brief](#) from the Western Canadian Short Line Railway Association

[Brief](#) from the United Steelworkers

[Brief](#) from David Doorey

[Brief](#) from the Railway Association of Canada

[Brief](#) from the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Canada

[Brief](#) from Federally Regulated Employers - Transportation and Communications

[Brief](#) from the National Maritime Group

[Brief](#) from the Retail Council of Canada

[Brief](#) from Port Montreal

[Brief](#) from the Freight Management Association of Canada

[Brief](#) from MEGlobal Canada ULC

[Brief](#) from the Shipping Federation of Canada

[Brief](#) from Unifor

[Brief](#) from the BC Maritime Employers Association

[Brief](#) from the Maritime Employers Association

[Brief](#) from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture

[Brief](#) from Dow Chemical Canada

[Brief](#) from the Chemistry Industry Association of Canada

[Brief](#) from the Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association

[Brief](#) from Martha Hall Findlay

[Brief](#) from Kemira Water Solutions

[Brief](#) from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce

[Brief](#) from the Canadian Meat Council

[Brief](#) from the Grain Growers of Canada

[Brief](#) from the City of Toronto

[Brief](#) from the BC Ferry and Marine Workers' Union

[Brief](#) from the IAM Union

[Brief](#) from the Canadian Union of Public Employees

[Follow-up](#) from the Mining Association of Canada

[Follow-up](#) from the Canadian Labour Congress

[Follow-up](#) from the Canada Industrial Relations Board

[Follow-up](#) from Employment and Social Development Canada



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