

December 21, 2023

On behalf of the Canadian business community, we are writing to express our concern over the government's Bill C-58, which seeks to ban the use of replacement workers in federally regulated industries.

Bill C-58 raises serious concern for Canadian businesses and millions of workers that rely on the vital services provided by federally regulated companies. These companies keep our communities connected, our economy open for business, and ensure Canadians have reliable access to essential goods.

Replacement workers allow organizations in sectors like trucking, rail, ports, telecom, and air to sustain a basic level of "lights on" continuity that preserves critical services for Canadians. This proposed legislation could impact people who use commuter services in Canada's largest cities — individuals who won't be able to get to work otherwise. It will mean propane might not get to hospitals or seniors' residences to provide heat, and it may mean that grain feed won't move to keep cattle fed.

Eliminating the possibility of using replacement workers to maintain these critical services will encourage unions to strike rather than to bargain collectively. As a result, there will be greater risk of significant damage to Canada's economy and our reputation as a reliable place to do business, as well as a place where citizens can predictably rely on the services they need to go about their everyday lives.

Canada's long-established collective bargaining system has been carefully crafted to encourage employers and unions to reach agreements at the bargaining table. But this new legislation would tip the balance of power in favour of unions and inflict serious economic consequences on Canadian communities, businesses, and their workers.

It is for these reasons that Parliament, as recently as 2019, made the correct, evidence-based decision to reject legislation banning replacement workers in federally regulated industries.

We would welcome an early opportunity to sit down with you to discuss the issue in more detail.

Sincerely,

Hon. Perrin Beatty, P.C., O.C.

President and Chief Executive Officer

Canadian Chamber of Commerce

Dan Kelly

President and Chief Executive Officer

Canadian Federation of Independent Business



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Dennis Darby P.Eng., ICD.D

President and Chief Executive Officer

Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters

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