



Dear Steelworkers,

With the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic taking hold across our country, we are facing a very different holiday season this year. It will be difficult to preserve traditions while also protecting ourselves, our families and our friends. The holidays will be more stressful and isolating for some, due to the harsh restrictions imposed by the pandemic.

Such has been the case for much of 2020, as this economic and public health crisis has created historic upheaval for the families of millions of Canadians – including tens of thousands of Steelworkers – who lost their jobs. While most of those layoffs were temporary, too many jobs still have not returned and too many families continue to face undue hardship.

It is undeniably clear that our governments at all levels must commit to investing in a progressive economic recovery focused on long-term job creation and addressing the appalling inequalities embedded in our system. There can be no “going back to normal.” This is what Steelworkers have fought for, from the outset of the pandemic, and we will continue to do so.

In solidarity with our labour and political allies, USW activism has helped to secure a number of improvements to emergency support programs, achieving tangible results for workers, businesses and the most vulnerable in our society.

Throughout the pandemic, our union also has maintained our aggressive activism on trade cases in crucial sectors such as steel, aluminum and forestry. We have won several of these cases, with USW local leaders playing pivotal roles by providing compelling evidence of the crises facing their workplaces and their communities.

I have been inspired by stories of Steelworkers’ spirit and solidarity at all levels of our union in response to the tremendous challenges of these times. From the courage of our front-line and essential workers, to USW locals that are producing and buying personal protective equipment to keep these workers safe, to our members who are volunteering and raising funds to help those in need in their communities.

Friends, these are not normal times, and this is not a normal holiday season. I know that all of you are thinking about our fellow Steelworkers whose jobs have not returned, and their families. Together we will continue to fight for them in the weeks and months ahead. In this spirit of Steelworkers’ solidarity, I wish you peace, health and happiness this holiday season and throughout the New Year.

In solidarity,

Ken Neumann

