

Robert Ashton
President, ILWU Canada
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Vancouver, BC V5L 4C4
via email: president@ilwu.ca

July 12, 2023

Dear Rob,

The United Steelworkers union (USW) is in solidarity with you and the 7,400 members of the International Longshore & Warehouse Union Canada (ILWU) in your strike for fairness against the B.C. Maritime Employers Association (BCMEA).

Members of the ILWU worked hard all through the COVID-19 pandemic, taking risks to their own health and their families' health to keep supply lines going without interruption.

Now, your courage and tireless work is being disrespected by the BCMEA, when it should be recognized and rewarded.

The USW remembers the support it received from the ILWU in 2019 when port workers did not cross any picket lines and refused to handle wood products from Western Forest Products while 2,600 USW Local 1-1937 members waged a nearly eight-month strike against the company.

Our union also remembers the support our members received from the ILWU in 2012, when Steelworkers at Rio Tinto, members of Local 9490, were locked out for six months. The ILWU showed up at our massive rally in Alma, Que. to take a stand against contracting out and two-tier wages, pensions and benefits.

Your union helped our members show multinational corporations that it is possible to take on huge companies, stop unjust demands and make wins for workers.

We live in challenging economic times. The cost of living is increasing at rates not seen in decades. Meanwhile, labour shortages abound.

Your strike reminds all of us in the labour movement of the urgency of passing federal anti-scab legislation. Anti-scab provisions exist in B.C., and are needed in all jurisdictions, to ensure corporations don't skirt the bargaining process and prolong work disputes by using replacement workers.

It is always time, but now in particular, for employers to show respect by listening to workers and their unions, paying fair wages including negotiated wage increases that do more than keep pace with inflation and for all workers to be in the union for fairness and protection, and negotiating union contracts at the bargaining table.

United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union
Syndicat international des travailleurs unis de la métallurgie, du papier et de la foresterie, du caoutchouc,
de la fabrication, de l'énergie, des services et industries connexes

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The USW represents 225,000 workers in every sector of the economy across Canada. We send our solidarity to you and your members in this struggle.

In solidarity,



Marty Warren
USW National Director



Scott Lunny
USW District 3 Director
(Western Canada)



Dominic Lemieux
USW District 5 Director
(Quebec)



Myles Sullivan
USW District 6 Director
(Ontario & Atlantic
Canada)

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