

May 25, 2026

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Jobs and Families
Employment and Social Development Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Re: Consultation on Building Canada Strong for All – Powered by Canada’s Workers

Dear Minister Hajdu,

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) appreciates the opportunity to provide input into the Government of Canada’s consultation on *Building Canada Strong for All - Powered by Canada’s Workers*. The OCC is the indispensable partner of business, representing a network of 60,000 members across Ontario’s regions, sectors, and sizes. Our purpose is to advance inclusive, sustainable prosperity for Ontario’s businesses, workers, and communities.

Ontario’s connectivity is foundational to Canada’s economic strength, and it is increasingly at risk. As Canada’s largest provincial economy, generating 37 per cent of national GDP, Ontario anchors the country’s primary aviation network and critical trade corridors.¹ For Ontario businesses and workers, labour stability in federally regulated sectors is a core condition for sustaining growth, competitiveness, and quality employment. When labour disruptions strike federally regulated industries, the damage is immediate, measurable, and far-reaching, for example:

- A two-week Canada-wide rail shutdown could reduce GDP by roughly \$3 billion and threaten tens of thousands of jobs, with a disproportionate share falling on Ontario firms and workers.²
- Canada’s port authorities move over a hundred million tonnes of cargo annually, supporting 213,000 jobs. Port shutdowns can disrupt billions of dollars in goods movement each day, as seen during the labour disruptions at the ports of Vancouver and Montreal in 2024.³
- A two-week Air Canada work stoppage could reduce Canada’s real GDP by approximately \$1.4 billion, with passenger volumes dropping an estimated 29 per cent.⁴
- Toronto Pearson processes nearly 30 per cent of Canada’s air passengers, 45 per cent of air cargo, and generates \$19.6 billion in GDP annually. Any disruption to aviation supply chains reverberates across the entire economy.⁵

¹ <https://www.ontario.ca/page/about-ontario>

² <https://www.signal49.ca/insights/rail-stoppages-will-have-widespread-impacts/>

³ <https://globalnews.ca/news/10864095/bc-montreal-port-shutdowns-economic-impact/>;

⁴ <https://www.desjardins.com/content/dam/pdf/en/personal/savings-investment/economic-studies/canada-pilot-strike-sept-12-2024.pdf>

⁵ <https://cdn.torontopearson.com/-/media/project/pearson/content/corporate/who-we-are/pdfs/annual-reports/gtaa-annual-report-2024.pdf>

Tourism generated \$130 billion in direct visitor spending in 2024, powering a total economic footprint of \$263 billion and supporting 1 in 10 jobs across the Canadian economy.⁶ Business events alone account for approximately \$47 billion of that impact and over 240,000 jobs. Both depend entirely on Canada's reputation as a reliable destination, a reputation directly undermined by recurring disruptions to air, rail, and hospitality supply chains.⁷

During both the Air Canada labour negotiations in August 2025 and the Canada Post strike in November 2024,⁸ the OCC emphasized that prolonged disruptions do more than halt a single service; they stall vital economic activity across tourism, hospitality, small business, and trade-related sectors at precisely the moments when stability is most needed. Our message has been clear: Canada needs a labour relations framework that supports meaningful collective bargaining while safeguarding the broader public and economic interest.

As the federal government reviews the labour relations framework, there is an opportunity to modernize it to act on this consensus. A modernized framework, one that balances the rights of workers and employers with the broader economic interest, would strengthen business confidence, protect workers and communities, and reinforce Ontario's and Canada's positions as reliable places to do business.

To that end, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce urges the federal government to:

1. **Modernize dispute resolution for deadlocked bargaining:** Ensure the labour relations framework includes mechanisms for timely action by government, applied equally to all parties, when negotiations are demonstrably deadlocked and when broader economic interests are at stake. This should include consideration of Canada's economic, trade and national sovereignty objectives, and predictable access to Ontario's supply chains for our international partners.
2. **Safeguard continuity in critical supply chain sectors:** Recognize that labour disruptions in critical transportation, logistics, and adjacent sectors have economy-wide consequences, extending far beyond the immediate parties to a dispute. As such, the framework should account for downstream impacts on businesses of all sizes (and disproportionate impact on smaller businesses) and create avenues for those impacted to make their voices heard and see their concerns reflected in government action.
3. **Strengthen early intervention and mediation capacity:** Invest in enhanced mediation, conciliation, and dispute-prevention supports to help parties resolve disputes earlier and more constructively, reducing the likelihood of prolonged disruptions that impose high costs on workers, employers, and provincial economies.

Now more than ever, the government must develop the tools necessary to keep key supply chain sectors functioning and not paralyzed by protracted labour disputes.

⁶ <https://www.destinationcanada.com/en-ca/value-of-tourism>

⁷ <https://www.destinationcanada.com/en-ca/news/destination-canadas-international-convention-attraction-fund-secures-21-major-international>

⁸ [https://occ.ca/mediareleases/ontario-chamber-urges-immediate-resolution-of-canada-post-labour-strike/;](https://occ.ca/mediareleases/ontario-chamber-urges-immediate-resolution-of-canada-post-labour-strike/)
<https://occ.ca/mediareleases/ontario-chamber-urges-swift-resolution-to-air-canada-labour-dispute/>

We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this consultation and would welcome continued engagement as the federal government considers options to modernize Canada's labour relations framework while protecting the resilience of national supply chains and the prosperity of Ontarians.

Sincerely,



Daniel Tisch, APR, FCPRS, ICD.D
President and CEO
Ontario Chamber of Commerce