

Office of the President and  
Chief Executive Officer

Cabinet du président  
et chef de la direction

January 16, 2009

Dear Member of Parliament:

Please accept my best wishes for a safe and happy 2009.

The upcoming Session of Parliament promises to be one of the most important in recent history as Canada has joined other major economies in entering a recession.

Just before Christmas, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce released its 2009 Economic Outlook. It will come as no surprise to you that we predict a rough year for Canada's businesses as they cope with declining consumer confidence, slowing employment growth and declining customer demand.

The complete text of our 2009 Economic Outlook is available for your reference on our website at [www.chamber.ca](http://www.chamber.ca)

As we look ahead to the Second Session of the 40<sup>th</sup> Parliament, in addition to global developments, Canada's economic recovery will depend upon the ability of Parliamentarians to work together to quickly make effective economic stimulus initiatives a reality.

Now, more than ever, Canada's economic engine – its businesses – need Government to provide the necessary tools to allow them to stay the course through these difficult times. These tools include more than economic stimulus. They also include the continued ability to manage their businesses to meet customers' and the country's needs.

In the last session of Parliament, some private members once again placed on Parliament's agenda amendments to the Canada Labour Code that would prevent federally-regulated employers from using replacement workers during labour disruptions.

We hope that Parliament will not consider implementing such legislation, particularly when Canadian businesses face unprecedented pressures.

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If ever there was an inappropriate time to hobble the providers of such services as telecommunications, airlines and airport services, trucking, railways and longshoring operations, this is it. A disruption of the services they provide would cause significant harm to the health, safety and welfare of Canadians and our economy. It would also be devastating to the hundreds of thousands of smaller businesses/employers that depend upon them, adding yet another hurdle as they try to survive in the current economic downturn.

The inability to use replacement workers, who are usually managers and retirees, could deprive Canadians of access to electronic banking, automated teller and retail debit card services and leave banks unable to complete domestic and international financial transactions. It could also mean interference with communications in hospitals and police services, as well as interruptions in travel and the delivery of goods to communities with limited or no road access. Domestic and international trade could also be disrupted, as would freight and passenger transportation.

Canadians – quite rightly – regard the services provided by our federally-regulated employers as essential to their personal well-being and to that of the country as a whole. That is why Parliament has acted in the past to legislate the end to work stoppages in federally-regulated industries, as was the case in 2007 during a labour dispute in the railway sector.

We believe that legislation which would amend the Canada Labour Code and has the potential to have such a significant impact on the functioning of Canada's economy, should not be introduced. If it is, it should be defeated. The members of the Canadian Chamber believe that any change to the Canada Labour Code deserves extensive study and not be undertaken lightly.

I wish you every success as you undertake your critical work on behalf of Canadians and urge you to vote against any legislation that could cause significant harm to Canada's federally-regulated businesses and all Canadians.

Sincerely,



Perrin Beatty



Minister of Industry



Ministre de l'Industrie

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H5

2/6/09  
The Honourable Perrin Beatty, P.C.  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
The Canadian Chamber of Commerce  
360 Albert Street, Suite 420  
Ottawa, Ontario K1R 7X7

Dear Mr. Beatty:

Thank you for your letter of January 16, 2009, regarding the Chamber's 2009 Economic Outlook, and conveying your concerns about the possible reintroduction of private members' motions to amend the *Canada Labour Code* to prevent federally regulated employers from using replacement workers during labour disputes. I regret the delay in replying to you.

As you indicated, the *Canada Labour Code* covers many key sectors, including communications, airlines and banking, which are important for a well-functioning economy. Bill C-337, a private members' bill to amend the *Canada Labour Code* to prohibit employers from using replacement workers during strikes or lockouts, was introduced in Parliament on March 11, 2009. I appreciate your concerns and will take the issues you have raised into consideration with respect to Bill C-337.

Once again, thank you for bringing your views on this important matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Clement

RECEIVED JUN 22 2009

Minister of Labour



Ministre du Travail

JUN 22 2009

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0J2

June 12, 2009

Perrin Beatty,  
President, Canadian Chamber of Commerce  
360 rue Albert St.  
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Ottawa, ON K1R 7X7

Dear Mr. Beatty:

Thank you for your letter on the matter of Bill C-310, *An Act to Provide Certain Rights to Air Passengers (Air Passengers' Bill of Rights)*. This is an issue that concerns many Canadians, and I appreciate your interest.

Our Government will not allow the punitive measures included in Bill C-310 to hurt our airlines and put Canadian jobs at risk. The long list of fines and penalties included in C-310 would reduce the financial viability of many airline routes in Canada, and loss of service would have a serious economic impact on the communities affected.

Major airlines, through the National Airlines Council of Canada, are proposing major changes which would enshrine certain passenger rights in their tariffs. I am confident that these measures will address the concerns of airline passengers and eliminate the need for punitive legislative measures.

I hope that this response addresses the concerns you have outlined in your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rona Ambrose'.

Hon. Rona Ambrose, P.C., M.P.

Canada