



May 15, 2025

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## **RE: CANADA POST AND THE CANADIAN UNION OF POSTAL WORKERS**

Dear Prime Minister, Ministers, and Madame Chairperson,

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Prime Minister Carney, on your hard-won election victory. As I wrote in my previous letter, it is encouraging to see an Albertan take on Canada's top job at this historic moment.



Now that you have earned a mandate to set a bold and ambitious direction for the country, I want to bring the perspective of Alberta labour to bear on a matter of critical importance. In the ongoing impasse in negotiations between Canada Post and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), I hope your government will carefully consider the implications of your next actions for all Canadian workers.

Canada Post helps unite this country through the dedicated efforts of a workforce that is salaried and unionized. Innovation and business diversification can undoubtedly boost Canada Post's bottom line, but this should be done in cooperation with workers and must serve their interests. The decision of the previous government to order 55,000 members of CUPW back to work and to use section 107 of the Canada Labour Code to refer the dispute to the Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) should not set a new precedent in this country.

In our letter of December 15, 2024, the Alberta Federation of Labour and Alberta's largest labour unions expressed several grave concerns about the handling of this matter. The decision to bring an end to workers' constitutionally protected right to strike after four weeks risked the appearance of setting arbitrary time limits on that right. We also had serious doubts about the merit of asking the CIRB to rule on whether or not the two sides to this dispute were too far apart to reach a negotiated settlement. This raised the distinct possibility that in future disputes, employers in federally regulated sectors—and even provincially regulated sectors—would simply stall negotiations and wait for the government to impose a settlement. Lastly, we did not want a situation in which Canada Post turns decent jobs into “precarious, low-paid jobs, akin to the jobs at modern-day sweatshops such as Amazon.”

I appreciated the response from Zia Proulx at Employment and Social Development Canada. On January 29, 2025, she wrote that the “Government of Canada is strongly committed to free collective bargaining and the right to strike guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.” My hope is that your decisions regarding Canada Post will make this commitment to collective bargaining and the right to strike abundantly clear to all.

Today, exactly five months after my first letter, all the same concerns apply. Yet I am encouraged by your frequently stated intention to make this new government different in important respects from the previous government. We hope that will be the case

when it comes to Canada Post workers. While elected officials from other political parties are making strong bids to earn the working-class vote, the current government can go beyond mere rhetoric and anchor its support for Canadian workers in concrete action.

My understanding is that your government is reviewing a report from the Industrial Inquiry Commissioner, William Kaplan, about this dispute. It is only a matter of days before the extension to the collective agreement between CUPW and Canada Post expires. Despite the urgency of the current situation, we hope that you and your cabinet, as well as the newly appointed Secretary of State for Labour, John Zerucelli, will make decisions that will ensure a brighter future for CUPW members—and by extension, all Canadian workers—over the long term.

At a time when Canada needs to carve out its own distinct economic vision, separate from the one the United States is following, we must decide carefully what kind of future we want. Is it a future in which workers and their families are sacrificed in the name of economic efficiency? Is it a future in which the pursuit of short-term profits is prioritized over the protection of long-term prosperity?

We hope your government will pursue a very different course of action and provide an example for other employers to follow. Specifically, we hope you will take the high road of good jobs and fair wages as opposed to the “Amazon low road” of inadequate wages and precarious employment. We hope you will help set a direction for Canada Post that encourages constructive negotiation between the employer and the union that creates a wide pathway for innovation and enduring prosperity for this vital Crown Corporation and the CUPW members who dedicate their working lives to its success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gil McGowan', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Gil McGowan  
President  
Alberta Federation of Labour

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