



BC FERRY & MARINE WORKERS' UNION

1511 Stewart Avenue
Nanaimo, BC V9S 4E3
250.716.3454 or 1.800.663.7009
250.716.3455 Facsimile

VIA Email

Prime Minister Mark Carney
Office of the Prime Minister
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2
pm@pm.gc.ca

May 6, 2025

RE: WORKING TOGETHER TO STRENGTHEN CANADA'S FERRY SYSTEM

Dear Prime Minister Carney,

Congratulations on your election. We look forward to working with your government to improve public services for all Canadians—including those who rely on ferries every day.

British Columbia's ferry system is critical infrastructure, not a luxury. It connects coastal communities, supports local economies, and keeps goods and workers moving. But for years, it's been chronically underfunded by the federal government.

The funding discrepancy is stark:

- In 2023–24, Marine Atlantic received over \$192 million in combined operating and capital grants.
- VIA Rail received more than \$566 million in federal operating and capital funds.
- BC Ferries received just \$35.6 million in federal grants—and a \$75 million repayable loan.

This isn't just unfair—it's unsustainable. BC Ferries moves more than 22 million passengers every year and an estimated \$2 billion in goods. Recently, B.C.'s chambers of commerce and tourism industry leaders joined us in raising the alarm: our ferry system is under growing pressure, and the current funding model doesn't reflect its scale or importance.

Our ferries are just as essential as those in the Maritimes. In fact, there is no way to visit every provincial capital in Canada without stepping foot on a ferry. It's time the federal government recognized ferries as part of the national transportation network—not just a regional concern.

Improved federal support to critical transportation infrastructure like our ferries will also strengthen our internal markets domestically and promote interprovincial trade.

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BC Federation of Labour

BC General Employees' Union

Canadian Labour Congress

National Union of Public & General Employees

International Transport Workers' Federation

During the campaign, you promised lower ferry fares for Atlantic Canada. We applaud that commitment and urge you to extend the same level of support to ferry-dependent communities in British Columbia.

We are calling on your government to establish permanent, equitable ferry funding, indexed to inflation and ridership, and to prioritize Canadian shipbuilding and good union jobs in your infrastructure plans.

We're ready to work with you to deliver safe, reliable, and publicly funded ferry service. Our members keep the coast moving. They deserve federal investment that reflects their essential role in Canada's transportation network.

Sincerely,

BC FERRY & MARINE WORKERS' UNION

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Eric McNeely', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Eric McNeely
Provincial President

CC: Mike Farnworth, Minister of Transportation
Nicolas Jimenez, CEO BC Ferries