Minister of Transport
and Leader of the Government
in the House of Commons

Ministre des Transports
et leader du gouvernement
à la Chambre des communes

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0N5

October 27, 2026

Eric McNeely
Provincial President
BC Ferry & Marine Workers' Union
mailroom@bcfmwu.com

Good day:

I am in receipt of your correspondence of September 10, 2026, on behalf of the BC Ferry & Marine Workers' Union, expressing your support for motion "M-35 Federal Operational Support for BC Ferries." The Prime Minister's Office has provided me with a copy of your letter as well.

The Government of Canada understands the importance of ferry services to coastal communities—they are an integral part of Canada's transportation network.

Transport Canada's support for ferry services is limited to those that meet the following criteria:

- (i) fulfill a constitutional mandate, such as the ferry service between Newfoundland and Nova Scotia provided by Marine Atlantic Inc.;
- (ii) serve remote communities; or
- (iii) provide interprovincial service and have had a history of longstanding financial support from the Government of Canada.

Under the Canada–British Columbia coastal ferry subsidy agreement of 1977, the Government of Canada provides an annual grant to the Government of British Columbia to support coastal ferry services. Through this agreement, the province has sole responsibility for determining which ferry services receive financial assistance. The total amount of the grant to British Columbia for the 2026–27 fiscal year is approximately $38.6 million, and the provincial government sends this funding to BC Ferries to support operations.

The federal government has also taken steps to provide various types of assistance to ferry operators in Canada, including waiving tariffs on the importation of used ferry vessels of all sizes; making ferry-related infrastructure

projects eligible for funding under the New Building Canada Fund (including vessel purchases or conversions, wharves, passenger terminals, and access road infrastructure); providing funding to BC Ferries through the safe restart agreement during the COVID-19 pandemic; and providing loans to BC Ferries to help renew its fleet.

Lastly, I should note that the Coastal Ferry Services Contract between the Province of British Columbia and BC Ferries establishes routes, service levels and service fees. Therefore, any questions concerning the cost of ferry services or potential fare reductions should be directed to the province. If you have not already done so, I would encourage you to reach out to British Columbia's Minister of Transportation and Transit, who oversees the provincial relationship with BC Ferries.

Thank you again for writing and sharing your position on this matter.

Yours sincerely,



The Honourable Steven MacKinnon, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Transport and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons

c.c. Office of the Right Honourable Mark Carney, P.C., O.C., M.P.
Prime Minister

The Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Finance and National Revenue

The Honourable Gregor Robertson, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada

Gord Johns, M.P.
Courtenay–Alberni