



Economic recovery imperilled by port labour dispute, says CIFFA

TORONTO, April 22, 2021 – “In the same week the federal government committed tens of billions to stimulate the economy, a labour dispute in one of Canada’s most critical transportation hubs is acting to suppress economic growth,” says Bruce Rodgers, Executive Director of the Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association.

The businesses and citizens of Montreal and Quebec have become pawns in a destructive game played by the parties in the Port of Montreal’s ongoing labour dispute, says the Executive Director of the Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association.

An orchestrated slowdown over the last two weeks has led to a growing backlog at the Port.

“Even if the dispute was resolved today, we’d still see serious consequences for people and businesses of all kinds,” says Bruce Rodgers, Executive Director of CIFFA. “But the situation doesn’t seem to be getting better. On the contrary, the disputing parties are digging in their heels. We are calling on government to intervene to ensure the situation doesn’t get any worse, but instead gets resolved immediately.”

CIFFA expressed frustration that the two sides were still engaged in pressure tactics rather than negotiating. A “slowdown” campaign by the longshoremen has reduced hours of operation, while a recent schedule change by the employer has angered the workforce.

“Missing in all these gestures is any awareness of the enormous cost the situation represents for shippers, consumers and for Canada,” said Rodgers. “Already shippers are steering traffic away from Montreal, a trend which may not be easily reversed.”

Rodgers said the fragile economic recovery is imperilled by the labour disruptions. “This is a critical time for Canada and the Canadian government needs to take action.”

For more information please contact Julia Kuzeljevich, Public Affairs Manager, CIFFA, juliak@ciffa.com.

The Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association (CIFFA) represents some 260 regular member firms from the largest of global multi-national freight forwarding firms to small and medium sized Canadian companies. CIFFA member companies employ tens of thousands of highly skilled international trade and transportation specialists. As a vital component of Canada’s global supply chain, member firms of the Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association (CIFFA) facilitate the movement of goods around the world. Freight forwarders provide a vital link in Canada’s global supply chains, enhancing export capabilities and assisting in the delivery of competitive solutions to Canada’s importing and exporting communities.