

# *International Brotherhood of*

**BOILERMAKERS • IRON SHIP BUILDERS**

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VIA FAX: (613) 941-6900

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Office of the Prime Minister  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Harper:

Allow us to congratulate you on the Speech from the Throne of October 16, 2013. Our 10,000 members across Canada thank you for your Government's support of the "Helmets to Hardhats" program, in which we are proud to have partnered with you since the very beginning of this most worthy endeavour.

There were many noteworthy initiatives outlined in the Speech from the Throne. Of particular note to our members were measures to support apprentices, enable the movement of skilled workers from province to province, and complete reforms to the Temporary Foreign Workers program.

Support for measures which allow young boilermakers to take advantage of critical training and retraining initiatives, such as those provided by our apprenticeship program and training centres across Canada, are most welcome to our membership. Our policy is "Canadians first" when it comes to employment in the skilled trades, and we are doing everything we can to increase the number of trained Canadian boilermakers. We look forward the measures to be announced by your Government which will support apprentices.

We would support additional action in this area to reduce inter-provincial barriers to the movement of skilled tradespeople. We realize this is largely an area of provincial jurisdiction. However, we would support efforts for all parties to coordinate their approaches in this respect.

Also with respect to skilled-trades mobility, we wish to briefly draw your attention to a Private Member's Bill currently awaiting second reading in the House of Commons. Bill C-201 would make travel and accommodation expenses tax deductible to skilled tradespeople who temporarily relocate for work. While the intent of the Bill is laudable, we would urge a degree of caution in its implementation, to ensure it does not impinge on any benefits already enjoyed by

skilled tradespeople through their collective agreements and increase the administrative burden on the tax system.

In relation to the Temporary Foreign Workers Program, it is our experience that our own program actually helps create Canadian jobs in the boilermakers and other trades. Since projects aren't slowed by a shortage of skilled labour in our trade, more Canadians can work on projects which would otherwise be temporarily shut down or delayed, resulting in a loss of employment. That being said, our union uses the Program in the way it was intended: not as a replacement for Canadian workers, but as a necessary tool to plug a temporary skilled-labour gap. Foreign workers hired under our Program are paid no less than a Canadian doing the same job. Our Program is an example of how the Temporary Foreign Workers Program was designed to work, and we appreciate the Government's support and partnership with us in this important project. We therefore are confident that the reforms of the Program which your Government will propose will maintain the aspects of the Program which serve legitimate goals, while eliminating the opportunity for abuse by unscrupulous organizations. Enclosed please find an article from the Edmonton Journal which describes our concerns more fully.

We bring these issues to your attention in the hope that your Government will continue to work with us in these important areas. We would be available at any time to supply further information or to meet with you or a representative to discuss our concerns.

Yours sincerely,



JOSEPH MALONEY  
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