



October 23, 2007

Mike Wallace, MP Burlington
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Mike:


We would like to take this opportunity to reinforce the deep concerns that the Burlington Chamber of Commerce has with private member's Bill C-415, *An Act to Amend the Canada Labour Code (replacement workers)*. As you are aware, Bill C-415, introduced into the House of Commons on March 22, 2007 by Mr. Mario Silva, Liberal MP for Davenport, will be voted upon in second reading in the House of Commons in the fall of 2007.

This Bill is very similar to Bill C-257, which was defeated at report stage earlier this year. Bill C-257 was ultimately rejected because it did not contain any provisions to ensure the protection of "essential services" in the event of a work stoppage. Bill C-415 attempts to address this issue by ensuring the *operation of facilities or production of goods to the extent necessary to prevent an immediate and serious danger to the safety or health of the public*. However, such a narrow scope does not take into account services that are essential to Canadian society and its economy.

Industries under federal jurisdiction are there because they are, in fact, essential. For example, Parliament recognized earlier this year that rail service provides an essential service by legislating an end to a work stoppage. Furthermore, if a work stoppage took place in the telecommunications industry and data transmission lines failed, the banks' ability to settle domestic and international financial transactions would be seriously disrupted, damaging the confidence other countries have in Canada, in addition to the crippling effect it would have on domestic financial services. Similarly, the potential to have transportation services halted, ports closed, etc. would be felt by all Canadians and Canada's trading partners who rely on an uninterrupted flow of goods.

Despite some small amendments, Bill C-415, like Bill C-257, does not address the need to maintain the continuity of essential services. The "essential services" provision in Bill C-415 simply deals with emergency-type services that have an immediate effect on the health and safety of the public. Such a narrow scope leaves out actual essential services and should therefore be defeated due to the harm it may cause to Canadian society and its economy. As such, the Burlington Chamber of Commerce would like to count on you in defeating Bill C-415. We would be pleased to meet with you to further discuss our concerns.

Sincerely,


Rosalene Phillips
Board Chair


Keith Hoey
President

cc: Honourable Stéphane Dion, M.P.