

July 31, 2025

SENT VIA EMAIL

The Honourable David Eby
Premier of British Columbia
premier@gov.bc.ca

Premier Eby,

Re: Supporting British Columbia's Forestry Sector and Communities

We are writing to respectfully request action from the British Columbia government to support the province's forestry sector, forestry workers, and the numerous forestry-dependent rural communities across British Columbia.

Unifor is Canada's largest private sector union, with more than 320,000 members across the country, working in every major sector of the Canadian economy. Unifor is also Canada's forestry union, with 24,000 members spread across 10 Canadian provinces – including around 3,000 forestry members here in British Columbia.

Unifor's forestry sector members work in a variety of forestry, logging, and firefighting occupations as well as wood product, bioenergy and pulp and paper manufacturing facilities.

The Poly-Crisis in British Columbia's Forestry Sector

Our members know first-hand that British Columbia's forestry sector continues to experience a perfect storm of repeated and intersecting crises, and a combination of economic, environmental, and global challenges continues to destabilize the broader sector.

The ongoing softwood lumber dispute and the threat of further tariffs have intensified a trade war that are causing disastrous repercussions across the forestry sector. On July 25, 2025, the U.S. Department of Commerce released its final determination for the Sixth Administrative Review (AR6) in the antidumping duty investigation of imports of certain softwood lumber products from Canada, raising the general antidumping duty to 20.56%. The final determination for countervailing duties under AR6 is expected on August 8, 2025, at which time the combined general softwood duties could be set at 34.94%.

Unifor has [called on the federal government](#) to negotiate a long-term agreement for softwood lumber exports to the United States that will avoid the rollercoaster of duties and threatened tariffs currently causing chaos in a sector that relies on long-term planning.

In March 2025, the White House announced a Section 232 investigation to determine the effects on national security of imports of timber, lumber and their derivative products. Depending on the findings of that investigation, we could see tariffs on these products starting in November. These potential tariffs would be *on top* of the already unacceptable 34.94% softwood duties, and would only deepen the crisis in the sector.

Every season, wildfires pose a serious threat to our forests, forestry operations, and communities that depend on forestry. Important conservation measures, including species and habitat protection efforts, continue to complicate long-term planning for the sector. Volatile prices are still making companies think twice about investments, and new European Union regulations could negatively impact the ability of forest products to be sold in that market and around the world.

This range of diverse crises has national and regionally-specific challenges. Workers and our communities deserve a more coordinated, strategic response developed by all levels of government, forestry workers and their union, Indigenous communities, forestry employers and industry groups, forestry training and education institutions, and local communities.

[An Expanded National Homebuilding Strategy](#)

Unifor has already proposed the creation of a National Homebuilding Strategy that better connects our forests and wood products with residential construction. Such a plan would address Canada's housing crisis while supporting a sustainable, value-added forestry industry.

Our proposal would build off the federal government's *Canada's Housing Plan* but tie it further back up the supply chain to include the harvesting, milling, and fabrication of Canadian-sourced and manufactured wood and engineered wood products. The goal is to create more value-added economic activity here in Canada, including British Columbia. Our proposal will provide good jobs for forestry workers, while also building a domestic market for innovative engineered wood products to be used in modular housing construction, which would ramp up housing supply and promote affordability.

[A Broader National Forestry Strategy](#)

A broader national forestry strategy would engage all the major stakeholders identified above to guide the creation and implementation of a powerful sector strategy to build a sustainable future for Canada's forest industries, the well-paying union jobs that they support, and the forestry communities in which they operate.

As already noted, a comprehensive national forestry strategy must include **regional flexibility**, since issues like species and habitat conservation, wildfire risk and impact, fibre supply, access to overseas markets, energy costs, and the labour market can vary widely from province to province and region to region.

Supporting Forestry Workers

During this period of unprecedented uncertainty, the provincial government must move quickly to implement a comprehensive plan to stabilize the B.C. forestry sector. Unifor supports a plan that will maintain operational continuity so that forestry workers, communities, and companies can weather the disruption resulting from new U.S. duties and potential tariffs.

All levels of government must work together to provide income supports to forestry workers who have been impacted by closures and curtailments driven by the softwood lumber dispute, the tariff threat, or other macro-economic shocks.

In some cases, to “keep producers producing, and workers working,” the federal and provincial governments must be prepared to provide liquidity supports to forestry employers who are facing short-term financial headwinds due to the ongoing poly-crisis in the sector.

Developing New Markets for British Columbia’s Forest Products

Unifor’s proposal for an enhanced National Homebuilding Strategy represents one effort to develop new domestic demand for forest products. But the provincial government must continue to support and expand other efforts to develop and improve domestic demand as well as new domestic and foreign (non-U.S.) markets.

Important Developments in Support of B.C.’s Forestry Sector

Your government has taken several important steps to support our province’s forestry sector. We were grateful for your participation in the Forestry Workers’ Summit in Victoria on March 12, 2024, an event co-sponsored by the PPWC, USW, and Unifor. At that event, we released [*A Better Future for B.C. Forestry: A Sector Strategy for Sustainable, Value-Added Forest Industries*](#), a report that proposes a series of key reforms to develop and implement a strong sector strategy for a modern, value-added, sustainable provincial forest industry.

The establishment of the Provincial Forest Advisory Council, the BCTS Review, the Forestry Worker Supports and Community Resiliency Council, and the Provincial Forestry Forum will all play a critical role in shaping B.C.’s response to the ongoing poly-crisis.

Unifor also believes that continuing to advance Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples is a critical component of a stabilization and support plan for the province’s forestry sector.

A Comprehensive and Coordinated Plan for the Future

British Columbia's forestry sector and forestry workers face an ongoing poly-crisis, and it is critical that governments and other stakeholders work together in coordination.

Provincial action is critical to an effective coordinated response. All three levels of government must work with other stakeholders to develop a comprehensive and coordinated national-level plan that respects and addresses regionally specific issues.

I look forward to meeting with you soon to discuss these proposals in more detail. British Columbia's forestry sector, and especially its forestry workers and communities, cannot afford to wait any longer.

Sincerely,



Lana Payne
National President



Gavin McGarrigle
Western Regional Director

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