



CANADA

For Immediate Release
November 29, 2009

Liberals call on government to get CN talks back on track

OTTAWA – Liberal MPs are urging the Conservative government to play a more active role in encouraging the resumption of negotiations after 1,700 Canadian National Railway locomotive engineers walked off the job when mediated talks collapsed.

“Canadians need a fully functioning transportation system – which means they need their government to get this dispute resolved,” said Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff. “We need to ensure ongoing operational safety while protecting businesses and shippers from suffering economic losses.”

After working without a contract for eleven months, the engineers went on strike after longer mileage caps were imposed into the terms of their collective agreement, citing safety concerns resulting from longer working hours.

“I am disappointed in the failure of the process, which raises serious questions about Minister Ambrose’s efforts to prevent matters from escalating to this point,” said Liberal Labour Critic Maria Minna. “We expect to see a renewed effort from the government to get the parties to voluntarily return to the bargaining table.”

“A lack of leadership by the Conservative government now means that Canadian shippers and consumers are threatened with a major disruption, right when our economy is especially vulnerable,” said Liberal Transportation Critic Joe Volpe. “Meanwhile, Minister Baird has taken no steps to inform Parliament or Canadians about the serious safety issues at stake in this negotiation.”

-30-

Contact:

Press Office
Office of the Leader of the Opposition
613-996-6740

Office of Maria Minna, MP: 613-992-2115
Office of Joe Volpe, MP: 613-992-6361