

Dear Port Transportation Association:

Thank you for your correspondence of April 29, 2020, regarding your request to suspend the Truck Licensing System (TLS) licensing fee payments during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Allow me to assure you that I value and recognize your members' ongoing commitment to operate amid the challenging conditions brought on by COVID-19. My thoughts go out to your members during this unprecedented time, and I hope your community is continuing to maintain good health.

As you are aware, under the *Canada Marine Act*, Canada Port Authorities are granted the mandate to operate on a commercial basis within the parameters of the Act and its Letters Patent. Therefore, the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority (VFPA), as a Canada Port Authority, operates at arm's length from the federal government. The federal government respects the autonomy granted to the VFPA and does not have the authority to oversee operational matters at the Port of Vancouver, such as the collection of fees under the TLS program. You have taken appropriate action by engaging directly with the VFPA on this matter.

The federal government has taken immediate action to provide financial relief and supports to businesses and employers suffering from COVID-19-related setbacks, including the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy. This subsidy is available to eligible employers that saw a drop in revenue of at least 15% in March and 30% for subsequent months. I encourage your members to apply for this subsidy, as needed. For ease of reference, you may refer your members to this link detailing Canada's Economic Response Plan: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html#businesses>. Additionally, the Government of British Columbia is also pledging various levels of support that your members may wish to pursue.

In closing, I thank your members for their steadfast commitment in helping to protect Canada's economy during this challenging period.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marc Garneau". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marc" and last name "Garneau" clearly legible.

The Honourable Marc Garneau, P.C., M.P.

Minister of Transport