

April 15, 2020

**SENT VIA EMAIL**

The Honourable Minister Carla Qualtrough, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion  
[Carla.Qualtrough@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Carla.Qualtrough@parl.gc.ca)

Dear Minister,

**Re: Canada Emergency Response Benefit and Supplemental Unemployment Benefit Plans**

Over the past weeks, all of Canada has united behind efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Actions taken to ‘flatten the curve’ have led to the temporary halting of vehicle production, which has affected hundreds of thousands of workers both directly and indirectly.

The emergency income assistance programs launched by your government this week, while having helped address an unprecedented backlog in Employment Insurance claims, have disrupted long-standing income security practices developed by employers and unions over many decades. In particular, the new programs do not appear to fully accommodate Supplemental Unemployment Benefit programs that are in our collective agreements.

It is our understanding that Canada Emergency Response Benefit recipients cannot receive payments from existing Supplemental Unemployment Benefit Plans registered with Service Canada.

To ensure that eligible workers can continue to receive benefits from a SUB Plan, we recommend your office consider the following measures:

- The Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion issue regulations to:
  - (a) Deem both the Canada Emergency Response Benefit and the EI Emergency Response Benefit as benefits for the purpose of section 37 of Employment Insurance Regulation (SOR/96-332); and

(b) Confirm that Supplemental Unemployment Benefit plan payments are not considered earnings for the purpose of the EI Emergency Response Benefit.

Minister, we are seeking a quick solution to this problem and encourage your office to consider these two proposals. We are open to further discussions and alternative approaches to resolve this problem expeditiously.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Jerry Dias  
National President



John D'Agnolo  
Chair, Ford Bargaining  
Committee



James Stewart  
Chair, FCA Bargaining  
Committee



Tim McKinnon  
Chair, GM Bargaining  
Committee

cc. Shane Wark, Angelo DiCaro

AD/kcope343