



BUILD THEM HERE

September 17, 2026
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BC Ferries CEO faces troubled waters at AGM

Unions to BC Ferries CEO and board: “Stop ignoring the economic benefits of building ferries in BC and commit to building future vessels here.”

VANCOUVER – BC Ferries CEO Nicolas Jimenez faced a large crowd of workers in B.C.’s shipbuilding and marine industries, ferry operators and supporters of the *Build Them Here Shipbuilding Coalition* at the BC Ferry Authority & British Columbia Ferry Services Inc.’s Annual General Meeting. Supporters asked the corporation to commit to building future vessels in B.C.

“We asked BC Ferries a simple question: Will you commit to building the next vessels in Canada? The CEO refused to answer. Ferry workers and coastal communities deserve a clear commitment and a long-term plan to build our ferries here,” said Eric McNeely, provincial president of the BC Ferry & Marine Workers’ Union.

Jimenez took no responsibility for the role BC Ferries played in deciding to offshore the work and made no commitments to building future ferries in British Columbia. He dodged direct questions on accountability for spending billions of dollars offshore during an international trade war.

“The economic case for building ferries in B.C. is clear: \$1.5 billion in added GDP, 10,000 person-years of work and over \$413 million in government revenues. Will BC Ferries commit to building future ships here at home?” asked Brynn Bourke, Executive Director of the BC Building Trades.

Earlier this week, the Build Them Here coalition issued a letter to both boards and the CEO, demanding answers to ten questions (attached). The coalition received no response.

Build Them Here is a coalition of more than 15 unions, representing over 7,000 workers in the province's marine industry including shipbuilders and operators, as well as workers in related industries.

BC Building Trades

BC Ferry and Marine Workers Union (BCFMWU)

BC General Employees Union (BCGEU)

BC Insulators Local 118

Boilermakers Lodge 359

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) - Northwest District 250

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 213

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 230

International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) Local 115

International Longshore Workers Union Canada

LiUNA 1611

Marine Workers & Boilermakers Industrial Union (MWBIU) Local 1

Marine and Shipbuilders CMAW Local 506

MoveUP

Sheet Metal Workers Local 280

Shipyards General Workers' Federation

UA Local 170

UA Local 324

United Steelworkers District 3

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September 14, 2026

Peter Lantin, Chair
B.C. Ferry Authority

cc: BC Ferry Services Board
BC Ferries CEO Nicolas Jimenez

Dear Mr. Lantin and members of the board,

BC Ferries is spending billions of dollars on new vessels. British Columbians deserve to know how those decisions are made and where that money is going.

The B.C. Ferry Authority's job is to oversee BC Ferries and make sure the corporation serves the public interest.

That should include considering B.C. jobs, Canadian materials, local suppliers, tax revenue and the future of our shipbuilding industry when purchasing ships.

Research commissioned by the Build Them Here coalition shows that building four major ferries in Canada could add about \$1.5 billion to Canada's economy. Most of that benefit would stay in B.C. It could also generate \$413 million in government revenue and create thousands of good jobs.

A Leger survey found that 81 per cent of B.C. residents want BC Ferries to release more information about the value of its contracts and how shipyards are selected. It also found that 84 per cent want the province to have a long-term plan to keep shipbuilding work and skills in B.C.

The public wants answers. Here are our questions:

1. How did you decide that building four ferries in China was in the public interest? Did your criteria account for the loss of jobs, tax revenue, economic stimulus to our GDP and supply chains?
2. Will you ask BC Ferries to explain how the shipyard was chosen and how the bids were compared?

3. When Canadian shipyards informed BC Ferries that the lack of Canadian content requirements made their bids unfeasible, what attempts were made to address their concerns?
4. Will BC Ferries release the full value of the contract and explain what's included in that cost?
5. Have you asked BC Ferries how building overseas will affect the cost and availability of replacement parts, the time needed for repairs and how long vessels might be kept out of service?
6. Have you met with B.C. shipyards, workers and suppliers since the contract was awarded? If not, will you?
7. What will BC Ferries change next time so Canadian shipyards have a fair chance to bid?
8. Will BC Ferries publish a long-term building schedule so our shipyards can prepare and compete for that work?
9. What is BC Ferries doing now to ensure its next ferries are built in B.C.?
10. Will you commit to building BC Ferries' next new ships in B.C.?

We have the workers and skills to build ferries. With a clear plan for steady work, we can build up the industry here. We're asking you to help make that happen.

We look forward to your answers.

Sincerely,

The Build Them Here Shipbuilding Coalition

