



**Canadian Fuels**  
ASSOCIATION  
**canadienne des carburants**

1000-275 Slater St.  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada K1P 5H9  
t. 613.232.3709  
canadianfuels.ca

## **Canadian Fuels Association Remarks on Rail and Port Operations to the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communication**

*November 19, 2025*

Good evening, Madam Chair, members of the committee and fellow panelists — thank you for the opportunity to speak today on behalf of refiners and fuel suppliers who have a direct stake in Canada's rail and port operations.

Canada's transportation-fuel system depends on an integrated logistics network. Our sector employs approximately 115,000 Canadians, producing about 110 billion litres of refined petroleum products and more than 5 billion litres of biofuels each year. It also operates around 80 distribution terminals and supplies over 11,500 retail and commercial sites nationwide.

Canadian Fuels Association members account for virtually all petroleum products and nearly 80% of biofuels produced in Canada, operating 16 refineries and 13 facilities that produce biofuels. These fuels are distributed through a mix of pipelines, marine, road and — crucially — rail. Our fuels support every sector of our economy from agriculture and mining to tourism and emergency services.

Further, our transportation fuel mix is evolving, using more lower carbon fuels. Producing, distributing and blending these products puts even greater demands on our rail and port systems.

When rail and ports operate reliably, refineries receive chemicals, renewable fuels, feedstocks and other inputs on schedule and finished fuels reach regional terminals and retail sites on time. When reliability degrades, the impacts are immediate and tangible: higher operating costs, inventory shortfalls, regional price pressures, and elevated risks to energy security.

Recent stakeholder submissions make three interrelated points that merit the panel's attention. First: **rail is a strategic complement to pipelines**. Where pipeline routes are constrained or market signals shift, rail provides essential flexibility for moving crude and refined product between production, refining and consuming regions. Maintaining and improving that rail capability is not optional — it is a strategic necessity for a resilient fuel supply.

Second: **port and terminal fluidity matters**. Evidence submitted by rail and port stakeholders indicates that port dwell times and terminal congestion have increased in recent years, directly reducing throughput and increasing costs, and the reliability of logistics for shippers and suppliers. These delays can translate into localized supply disruptions at a time when consumers and critical services cannot afford interruptions. Bottlenecks at the ports limit the

reliable transportation of goods critical to our sector and the Canadian economy. Addressing congestion at marine gateways is critical to preserving national supply-chain competitiveness.

Third: **investment, transparency and coordination are the levers that work.** Shippers consistently call for targeted capital investments in rail-to-terminal connections and port handling capacity; better data sharing on capacity and congestion metrics; and regulatory clarity to ensure interoperability and safety. In addition, stakeholders ask that any government action be tied to outcomes: demonstrable improvements in throughput, safety performance, emissions reductions, and resilience to labour or extreme-weather events. I respectfully recommend the panel consider the following actions:

1. **Accelerate targeted infrastructure funding** for chokepoints — short-line connectors, terminal expansions, and berth/yard upgrades that demonstrably raise throughput.
2. **Mandate and support real-time data sharing** among ports, rail carriers, refiners and major shippers so that all parties and regulators can anticipate congestion and reallocate flows proactively.
3. **Incentivize safety and decarbonization upgrades** — for example, support for interoperable and enhanced train control and for investments that reduce emissions per tonne-kilometre.
4. **Embed contingency planning and labour-management frameworks** in port and rail modernization efforts to reduce the risk of disruptive stoppages and ensure continuity of essential fuel flows.

Delivering on these actions will protect Canadians' access to safe, affordable fuel, preserve jobs, and strengthen Canada's position in global energy and trade networks.

In closing, reliable rail and port operations are not a niche industry concern: they are a national economic and public-safety priority. The submissions before you make a clear, unified case — supply security, economic competitiveness, and environmental and safety objectives are all best achieved through targeted investments, better coordination, and transparent measurement of outcomes. Thank you for your attention; I look forward to your questions.