



September 3, 2021

## TO ALL IBEW FIRST DISTRICT LOCAL UNIONS

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

This Labour Day is our day to celebrate the accomplishments we have achieved together as part of the world's oldest and largest electrical workers union and the greatest union in the world, the IBEW.

We only have to look at the past year and a half while living and working through the COVID-19 pandemic to see why unions like the IBEW are more important than ever. We have successfully fought for increased safety protocols, personal protective equipment at work and even additional compensation. It is a well-documented fact that unionized workers have fared better than their nonunion counterparts throughout the pandemic.

Once again, Labour Day will be celebrated differently than we have in the past due to the COVID-19 protocols. Unfortunately, many of our traditional events such as parades, union family gatherings and barbecues have been cancelled or changed to a virtual event again this year. There are however other innovative ceremonies such as caravans that have been organized to show our solidarity and continue celebrating the struggles and achievements of the labour movement.

As our members are well aware, the work of organized labour is never ending and this year we find that our country is in the middle of a federal election just a few short weeks away. Political parties, candidates and leaders are all vying for our votes, and let us not forget that every election is important. This election will decide which party will govern us after September 20<sup>th</sup> and guide us through the fourth wave, which is already hitting many parts of our country, and our choice will ultimately decide what our post-pandemic recovery will look like. We need a government that recognizes the value, the contributions and sacrifices that workers, including our IBEW members, have made to build our country and keep us safe over the past 19 months and beyond.

Workers are the recovery. And a more equitable recovery is focused on four critical priorities to help our country recover and keep us safe in the future:

1. Replace lost jobs during the pandemic with better ones
2. Disaster proof our social safety net
3. Strengthening public health care
4. Tackle climate change in a way that ensures that no worker is left behind

With over 2 million jobs lost, we need a plan to replace those jobs with better ones. A good job has a living wage, supports families and communities. It has a pension, it is permanent, and it is



unionized. Canada's economic recovery plan must include major public investments in infrastructure, public services and made-in-Canada production and procurement, and ongoing government support for workers in the hardest hit sectors.

When the next economic disaster hits, we need to make sure Employment Insurance is there for everyone who needs it, and we have a plan for universal, affordable childcare that works for families. We need to invest in things that keep communities strong, like affordable housing. We need expanded public investment in renewable energy production, green building construction and public transportation, as well as skills training. These investments would generate decent jobs and allow Canada to achieve its climate change targets.

There is no doubt that this pandemic has been challenging to navigate over the last 19 months for all of us. It has also created unprecedented challenges on how we represent our members across this vast country. I can't tell you how honoured I am to have led this organization through these difficult times.

I'm proud to say that the IBEW has advocated for and were successful in achieving results for workers including stronger health and safety practices on the job by ensuring the federal government knows the issues our members, many of which were deemed essential, were facing from day one of this pandemic and the supports they needed.

I want to thank you all for everything you do and let you know that I could not be prouder of how our membership has responded to the challenges presented by the pandemic. Many of you were deemed essential, rose to the occasion, and made the IBEW proud.

Please take some much-deserved time to spend with your family and friends and get some much-needed rest and relaxation, but please do so safely. If you are involved in any of the Labour Day activities, please remember to wear a mask, wash your hands regularly and to social distance in all settings. We cannot let down our guard against this terrible virus. Stay safe and stay healthy.

Thank you again for all that you do for the IBEW.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Reid".

Tom Reid  
International Vice President

TR/ln

cc: International Representatives  
IBEW System Council #11  
IBEW CCO