



A rendering of the four hybrid-electric Island Class vessels slated to join the B.C. Ferries fleet in 2022. (Image courtesy B.C. Ferries)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: B.C. missing out on ship-building industry

B.C. now losing out on the economic benefit of building ferries, says letter writer

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To the editor,

Re: [B.C. Ferries budgets \\$200M to add four more hybrid-electric vessels to fleet, Nov. 6.](#)

The reality may be there is no physical space to build these ships in B.C. and there were no Canadian bidders, but let's not forget how we got here.

The B.C. Liberals capsized the shipbuilding industry in B.C. by sending new work off-shore to Germany, Poland and Romania over the past 15 years.

The downside to that continued behaviour is B.C. trades workers are falling behind on new technology, and apprenticeship opportunities.

B.C. is also losing out on the economic benefit of building ferries. Not just the direct jobs in the shipyards, but the spin-off jobs created when local companies supply their materials and labour created from the extra economic activity, like we saw when we built Spirit Class super-ferries in the '90s.

These are good mortgage-paying, family-raising jobs leaving our province in areas where low-paying service jobs have become the primary reason for low unemployment, a negative trend we should all have concern over.

Phil Venoit, business manager, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 230

The views and opinions expressed in this letter to the editor are those of the writer and do not reflect the views of Black Press or the Nanaimo News Bulletin. If you have a different view, we encourage you to write to us or contribute to the discussion below.