



Saturday, February 20, 2010

Governors and Premiers to Work Together for Enhanced Economic Growth

During the National Governors Association Winter Meeting, U.S. Governors and Canadian Premiers discussed common challenges, compared innovative policy solutions and agreed to work to address the key issues of trade, border security, energy and the environment.

Shared Borders; Shared Economies

Premiers and Governors observe that, despite some encouraging signs, the economic situation remains difficult for many American and Canadian workers, families and companies. They agree that growing the U.S.-Canada economies is critical to building stronger workforces and improving the quality of life for Canadian and American citizens.

The U.S. and Canada share the largest trading relationship in the world with more than US \$1.5 billion worth of goods and services crossing the border every single day. This relationship supports 7 million American jobs and 3 million Canadian jobs. Thirty-six U.S. states export more goods to Canada than to any other country in the world.

The countries also share a common border that stretches across more than 8000 kilometers. The security and integrity of that border is paramount for protecting citizens and facilitating open and efficient trade between states and provinces/territories.

Governors and Premiers recognize that the success of this economic relationship is largely dependent on the highly integrated nature of American and Canadian supply chains. As such, Premiers and Governors agreed to explore ways to work together to build awareness and appreciation for the mutual benefits of the open two-way trade system and resist the imposition of market-distorting trade barriers between states and provinces/territories.

Energy and the Environment

The U.S. and Canada have an extraordinary opportunity to collaborate in the areas of climate change and energy. To date, much of the leadership on climate change and energy in North America has come from U.S. states and Canadian provinces/territories. Governors and Premiers pledged to continue regional collaboration and innovation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote energy security. Furthermore, Governors and Premiers noted the global clean energy economy will provide significant employment and economic opportunities.

Working Together

Action is needed from all orders of government and results are best achieved by working together towards common goals. As such, Premiers and Governors agreed to explore ways that states, provinces and territories could work together, either through bilateral or regional agreements or cooperative actions, to strengthen the U.S.-Canada economic relationship, ensure the integrity of our borders, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Through a joint letter to the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Canada, Governors and Premiers will also call on their federal governments to:

- assist them in enhancing American and Canadian competitiveness by supporting and promoting policy innovation by states, provinces and territories; and,
- collaborate with them when developing national strategies that directly affect commerce, security and energy and environmental issues critical to states, provinces and territories.

Premiers and Governors value the dialogue and the relationships established during this meeting and look forward to future opportunities for the Council of the Federation and the National Governors Association to work together to promote their members' common interests.

For further information, contact:

Lindsay de Leeuw
Council of the Federation Secretariat
613-563-4066
613- 851-5978 (cell.)
Lindsay@councilofthefederation.ca