



## **Canada's Premiers United for Canadians**

**CHARLOTTETOWN, July 22, 2026** – Canada's Premiers support a strong and united Canada. Premiers are working together to build a prosperous country for Canadians by taking action on health care, safe communities, cost of living challenges, economic growth, and strengthening Arctic security and sovereignty.

In an increasingly volatile geopolitical environment, provinces and territories are on the front lines of strengthening Canada's economy by attracting investment, supporting strategic sectors, developing infrastructure, and deepening cross-border economic ties.

Premiers look forward to meeting again with the Prime Minister on recent trade actions by the United States and the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement. Premiers support efforts to negotiate a comprehensive deal that includes the full range of tariff-affected sectors, including softwood lumber, steel, aluminum, manufacturing, and auto industries. Premiers urge the federal government to maintain a clear, timely consultation process with provinces and territories during negotiations.

The past year has been challenging for the country. A more resilient and prosperous future for all Canadians is achieved when First Ministers work together, leveraging the strengths of provinces and territories, and focusing on practical solutions.

### **Health Care**

Like all Canadians, Premiers are concerned with access to timely and appropriate health care services, including treatments and medicines. Provinces and territories continue to increase health care spending, make systems improvements and seek ways to better support access to medicines, clinical trials and innovative treatments. Premiers noted that provinces and territories continue to face mounting health care costs and growing expenditure pressures that are outpacing their revenue growth. Critical health care funding is set to expire as soon as March 2027, leading to a fiscal cliff. The federal government must step up as a full funding partner to address rising cost pressures, meet patient needs, and support health professionals. Provinces and territories must be able to exercise the flexibility necessary to respond to evolving circumstances and ensure timely delivery of health care services to their residents.

As provincial and territorial governments are responsible for delivering quality health care services, such as mental health and addictions programs, home and community care services, long-term care, pharmaceuticals, and drugs for rare diseases, certainty is needed on the federal government's intentions as a funding partner to plan effectively and ensure the ongoing delivery of health care services to Canadians. Premiers are calling on the federal government to renew these funding agreements and commit to maintaining at minimum a 5 per cent CHT growth rate annually after March 31st, 2028.

Within the next two years, Premiers need a long-term federal commitment to flexible and sustainable funding that supports provincial and territorial health care priorities and ensures the continued delivery of quality care and support investments in health infrastructure.

Premiers underscore that pressing health care and infrastructure needs vary across jurisdictions, highlighting the importance of increased unconditional and flexible federal funding.

### **Affordability**

Premiers are taking action to support people and businesses as they navigate increased costs of food, fuel, electricity, housing and other needs.

Premiers are committed to providing stable, affordable and adequate housing. To upgrade the housing supply in Canada, including increasing access to social and affordable housing, it is essential that both orders of government work together and that long-term flexible federal funding supports jurisdictions in meeting their distinct needs.

Investing in supply chain infrastructure is one of the most effective ways to improve affordability by lowering the cost of moving foods, reducing bottlenecks, and strengthening economic resilience.

### **Supporting Growth Across Canada's Economy**

Premiers are focused on supporting growth and are committed to working in partnership with Indigenous peoples to grow Canada's economy.

Premiers agreed that affordable, accessible child care is an important driver of labour force participation and economic growth. The current federal funding model is inadequate and short-term. Provinces and territories require stable, predictable funding through a minimum 10-year framework. This framework must be flexible and allow provinces and territories to design sustainable programs that supports families that need it most, for example flexibility for issues such as income testing and the treatment of private and non-profit spaces where it applies.

Premiers discussed federal barriers that hinder major projects and economic growth. Continued federal action is needed to shorten permitting timelines and accelerate approvals for major projects, while ensuring continued safety of communities, and robust environmental protections. Federal Buy Canadian policies must remain flexible enough to advance projects in a timely and cost-effective manner without unnecessary administrative burden.

Premiers call on the federal government to implement tax reforms that strengthen Canada's long-term productivity and competitiveness by improving the investment environment. This could include an Accelerated Capital Cost Allowance for nationally significant projects to attract private capital, improve project economics, accelerate construction, and enhance Canada's global competitiveness.

Getting goods to domestic and global markets will require significant, predictable, and flexible federal investment to enhance trade and energy corridors and transportation

infrastructure. These investments must reflect provincial and territorial priorities such as airports, electricity transmission, pipelines, ports, rails and roads.

Provinces and territories are taking bold action to cement Canada's position as a global energy superpower. The capacity to generate, transmit and store an abundant supply of affordable energy will unlock enormous economic opportunities, vital to both Canada's prosperity and sovereignty, including critical mineral mining, processing and refining; advanced manufacturing and defence industries; artificial intelligence and data centres; and agriculture and food production.

As electricity demand grows, Premiers emphasize the importance of continued collaboration towards reliable and fairly priced electricity, especially in remote and northern regions, and small jurisdictions.

Premiers welcome the federal government's Defence Industrial Strategy and support Canada's commitment plan to make defence and security-related investments equal to 5 per cent of GDP by 2035. Federal defence investments must support community development and economic participation across all regions of Canada and strengthen Canadian sovereignty.

### **Canada's Arctic Security and Sovereignty**

A secure Canadian Arctic is a sovereign Canadian Arctic, which is a benefit to all Canadians. Federal dual-use investments must contribute to the wellbeing of Arctic and northern communities and advance modern and historic commitments to Indigenous peoples in the region. Defence and other multi-purpose investments must be developed in close collaboration with northern communities to ensure sustainable and meaningful benefits. The renewed focus in this area, including around partnership with Indigenous peoples is an important start. Many of the issues raised by Premiers including around health care, energy, housing, and policing are essential to showing this sovereignty.

### **Productivity and Labour**

Canada's strong, skilled, and diverse workforce supports growth across the economy, but federal investments for Labour Market Transfer Agreements (LMTAs) are not keeping pace with the level of ambition required to accelerate Canada's growth and competitiveness. Additional investments are required to develop the skilled trades workforce needed to support the advancement of major projects. Predictability, flexibility and fairness of LMTAs is more effective than sector-specific federal interventions.

Provinces and territories are best placed to make decisions to meet local labour market needs.

More has to be done to address youth unemployment so that young Canadians looking to get a job and start their career have more opportunities to do so. Recent announcements by the federal government are a step in the right direction, but must provide more flexibility and respect provincial and territorial jurisdiction. These approaches must ensure young people can access good jobs and acquire the critical experience needed to launch successful careers.

Federal immigration policies have impacted Canada's ability to attract and retain global talent - an imperative more important than ever given our collective commitment to build

major projects. As a shared area of jurisdiction in the Constitution, Premiers call for a greater role in economic immigration including increased provincial and territorial nominee allocations.<sup>1 2</sup>

Building on the Canadian Mutual Recognition Agreement signed in 2025, Premiers have directed their Internal Trade Ministers to incorporate services into the agreement.

### **Furthering Public Safety of Canadians**

Premiers acknowledge the federal government's commitment to bail reform and addressing repeat and violent offending. They highlighted policing challenges, such as staffing shortages, vacancies, rising costs, and governance concerns. The federal government must provide a clear decision on the future of RCMP contract policing and to urgently begin negotiations regarding new Police Service Agreements for those who want them. Additionally, Premiers call for stable, long-term federal funding for youth violence prevention, like anti-gang initiatives, weapons control, and addressing illicit (contraband) tobacco. Organized criminal activity and extortion are ongoing concerns across the country. Premiers call for urgent federal action to develop additional tools and legislative frameworks to tackle organized crime.

Premiers noted the importance of provincial and territorial perspectives being represented within Canada's justice system, including the potential role of provincial and territorial engagement and approval in the judicial appointment process.

Premiers shared concerns about the rapidly increasing use of AI and social media among Canada's youth and the associated digital harm and mental health risks. Provinces and territories are already advancing important measures, such as youth access restrictions and digital literacy education. Premiers support the introduction of federal online harms legislation and encourage rapid adoption. Close collaboration with provinces and territories in the development of regulations, respectful of provincial and territorial laws and regulations, will best support protections for young people. Legislation should protect free speech and recognize the role of parents to make informed decisions and ensure protection of personal and private information.

Premiers acknowledged the members of law enforcement who have been killed or seriously injured while serving and protecting communities across the country. These tragedies underscore the need for greater support for law enforcement amid the growing risks officers face. Premiers remain committed to continued collaboration to keep both the public and frontline officers safe. Premiers directed their Justice and Public Safety Ministers to identify and develop options to raise for federal action that would strengthen measures to protect the safety of law enforcement, first responders, and frontline workers across our jurisdictions and improve public safety.

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<sup>1</sup> Nunavut does not have its own nominee program

<sup>2</sup> Since 1991, under the Canada-Québec Accord relating to immigration and temporary admission of immigrants, Québec fully assumes sole responsibility for establishing immigration levels, and for the selection, francization and integration of immigrants. Québec will continue to make additional demands regarding immigration powers in a bilateral way to the federal government.

Canadians have the right to express their views and protest peacefully. To preserve our democratic values, Premiers agree it is vital that all Canadians express themselves with respect and civility, without recourse to violence.

Premiers stand with those who are suffering the impacts of natural disasters and remain deeply concerned by the growing number and intensity of large-scale events, including wildfires, hurricanes, and flooding. Premiers directed PT ministers responsible for emergency preparedness to work together to consider a pan-Canadian networked training model. This will ensure that staff and resources from provinces and territories can seamlessly be put to work fighting natural disasters anywhere in the country. They recognize the important work of the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre to support firefighting efforts and commend the work of wildfire fighters on the front lines.

### **NWT's Premier Simpson to Chair the Council of the Federation**

On August 1, 2026, Northwest Territories (NWT) Premier R.J. Simpson will assume the Chair of the Council of the Federation. The NWT will host the next Summer Meeting of Canada's Premiers on July 14-15, 2027.

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