

March 27, 2008

To MPs: Chris Charlton, David Christopherson, Wayne Marston, David Sweet and Dean Allison

I would like to bring to your attention an important report produced by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce (CCC) and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, in collaboration with members, chambers, and 43 Canadian and U.S. associations, entitled *Finding the Balance: Reducing Border Costs While Strengthening Security*. This large, representative coalition has come together with a sense of urgency to collect specific, near-term and practical recommendations on what can be done to reduce Canada-U.S. border related costs while strengthening security.

With escalating costs, growing offshore competition, and approximately 7.1 million jobs in the United States and 3 million jobs in Canada derived from the \$1.5 billion USD in two-way trade that crosses our shared border every day, there is an pressing need to reduce border costs and facilitate the movement of low-risk cargo and travellers.

While long-term solutions are needed, we believe the urgency of the issue makes it necessary for Canada and the United States to work towards advancing near-term and achievable solutions. The enclosed binational and collaborative report offers recommendations to the Canadian and U.S. governments to increase participation in trusted shipper and traveller programs and efficiently use border resources to facilitate the movement of legitimate trade and travel. The report's recommendations all incorporate inter-dependent strategies to achieve a mutually beneficial balance between North American security and competitiveness.

While the Canadian Chamber of Commerce is pleased with the level of initial interest shown by Canadian government officials in this report, it will take considerable effort to turn this interest into concrete action. I encourage you to read the report and become an active participant in pushing for the needed changes.

If you would like to discuss the report and how you might be able to support this important endeavour, please contact Shirley-Ann George or Ryan Stein at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce (613 238-4000).

Sincerely,

Tyler MacLeod
President, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce

Attachment: *Finding the Balance: Reducing Border Costs While Strengthening Security*.

cc: Ryan Stein, Canadian Chamber of Commerce