

Wish List for NAFTA Modernization

As Canada and the U.S. engage in discussions about the future of the North American Free Trade Agreement and management of our common border, the CABC is pleased to offer our top ten suggestions for how to grow the economy and seize the opportunities presented by the Trump and Trudeau administrations and the 115th Congress. These ideas represent diverse sectors from both sides of the 49th parallel, with some of the most iconic brands in the world as well as innovative startups and entrepreneurs," said Maryscott Greenwood of the Canadian American Business Council.

Wish List for NAFTA Modernization and Renewed Canada/US Border Policy

1. Create a chapter on regulatory cooperation that codifies and strengthens the Canada/US Regulatory Cooperation Council as a permanent entity, and ensures the governments work on tandem on new major rules, with a process to "look back" and align existing regulations.
2. Mutually recognize product standards, testing and certification, and implement zero tariffs on all products.
3. Revamp "Buy America and Buy Canada into one Buy US/Canada" requirement, or consider Canada "domestic" for the purpose of all official procurement at the federal and state levels as it currently is in the defense sector.
4. Support further integration of our North American energy markets, the importance of a robust and interconnected infrastructure system to connect supply and demand, and promote predictable, efficient and expedited regulatory regimes to ensure necessary cross-border infrastructure can be placed in-service in a timely fashion to benefit the North American economy.
5. Enhance protection of intellectual property including, but not limited to, exploring policy options in Canada to counteract judicial interpretations of IP rules, which serve to invalidate long standing pharmaceutical patents.

6. Establish a framework of rules to promote and govern digital trade, including provisions prohibiting data localization and digital customs duties, enabling cross-border data, securing basic non-discrimination principles for digital products.
7. Update the rules governing the movement of people across our common border to reflect modern categories of employment including but not limited to those who work in the digital economy.
8. Continue to enhance and modernize joint security arrangements to foster faster, freer movement of goods and services cross-border, and more predictable border processing.
9. Amicably settle the softwood lumber dispute based on movement toward free north/south trade in logs and lumber.
10. Establish strong and enforceable currency manipulation disciplines. While we recognize that the US, Canada and Mexico do not manipulate currency, we believe that including strong and enforceable currency manipulation disciplines in a new NAFTA would set an important precedent and establish a platform for collaboration in opposition to other countries that use currency manipulation.