December 2, 2024

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Subject: Urgent Action Required to Address Proposed U.S. Tariffs on Canadian Imports

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

As President and Chief Executive Officer of the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, I am writing to express our deep concern regarding President-elect Donald Trump's recent announcement of a potential 25% tariff on imports from Canada and Mexico. This proposed measure poses a significant threat to the economic stability of Edmonton, Alberta, and Canada as a whole, and we urge the Government of Canada to continue taking swift and immediate action to mitigate its potential impacts.

Edmonton's economy, as one of Canada's largest trade hubs, is heavily reliant on its close trading relationship with the United States, particularly in manufacturing, energy, and transportation. The proposed tariffs risk increasing costs for businesses and consumers, disrupting supply chains, and undermining the competitiveness of Canadian industries in North American and global markets. Alberta exported $156 billion worth of products to the United States in 2023, which represent a substantial portion of the province's GDP, and any disruption to this trade relationship would have severe repercussions on Canadians.

Research underscores the economic risks of protectionist policies. A recent analysis from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce highlights that even a 10% tariff on Canadian imports would result in real income losses of 1.5% and productivity declines of 1.6% for Canada. An updated analysis suggests that the proposed 25% tariff would only amplify these effects, leading to economic costs per Canadian ranging from $1,300 CAD - $1,900 CAD, and economic costs per American ranging from $800 USD - $1,300 USD. These impacts would ripple through Edmonton's economy and affect workers and businesses across the country.

Canada's strong trade relationship with the U.S. has been mutually beneficial for decades, with Canadian goods and services playing a critical role in the U.S. economy. For instance, the U.S. imports over 4.3 million barrels of oil per day from Canada, alongside vehicles, machinery, plastics, and wood products. Canada is the top trading partner for 34 U.S. states, illustrating the deeply integrated nature of our two economies.

The Edmonton Chamber of Commerce urges the Government of Canada to act swiftly by leveraging diplomatic channels to engage with the incoming U.S. administration before these tariffs are implemented. In doing so, it is vital to emphasize the importance of reducing trade barriers between our countries, as well as the importance of cross-border cooperation and the economic interdependence of both nations.

We also request that the Government of Canada work in close collaboration with the provinces to ensure any policy decisions consider regional differences and impacts across the country, and to consider contingency measures that would support affected industries and communities in the event these tariffs are implemented.

Thank you for your urgent attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Hon. Doug Griffiths, MBA
President and Chief Executive Officer
Edmonton Chamber of Commerce

CC: Hon. Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta, Government of Alberta
Hon. Matt Jones, Minister of Jobs, Economy, and Trade, Government of Alberta
Tany Yao, Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Northern Development, Government of Alberta