



HOUSE OF COMMONS
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Perth-Wellington

August 8, 2018

The Honourable Dominic Leblanc
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Leblanc,

We would like to congratulate you for your appointment as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Northern Affairs and Internal Trade. This designation recognizes the importance of maintaining harmony between the federal government and the different provinces and territories that make up our nation.

When it comes to Intergovernmental Affairs, you will have numerous challenges ahead of you owing to the Prime Minister's missteps in this area since the beginning of his mandate. The main priorities that we are very concerned about and you will have to address rapidly include finding a resolution to the conflict between BC and Alberta on the Trans Mountain expansion project to ensure that it will be constructed as early as possible. We are also concerned about the imposition of your Carbon Tax on the provinces. In light of the news that Ontario and Saskatchewan intend to fight this imposition in court, we urge you to withdraw your plan to force provinces to implement a Carbon Tax against their will. Moreover, Quebec and Manitoba have said they will challenge the federal government's plan to allow homegrown marijuana. Unfortunately, your government is refusing any compromise. Finally, the issue of the illegal border crossers creates a huge strain, especially in Quebec and Ontario, where the problem is

the greatest. These provinces are expecting help, including financial assistance, and will require support to control the situation created by the Prime Minister.

Northern Affairs

The challenges in Canada's north are immense. After over two years of negligence by the federal government, northerners deserve a Cabinet Minister who has their back. We urge you to quickly collaborate with territorial leaders to reduce barriers to economic prosperity. It is unacceptable and dangerously paternalistic that elected northern leaders were given less than an hour's warning before a five-year moratorium was slapped on Arctic oil and gas development. Northerners must have the freedom to make decisions about their natural resources and environment, while enjoying the same economic opportunities experienced in the south.

Further, the carbon tax will increase the cost of everything for northerners, including food and other vital supplies. We know that the former Nunavut Premier signed onto the Pan-Canadian Climate Framework with the assurance that the unique circumstances of daily life in the territories would be taken into account. To date, the Trudeau Government has shown no interest in following through on its commitment. We urge you to take action by cancelling the carbon tax immediately. Food insecurity is another important issue that must be addressed. Efforts to improve access to nutritious food must continue, and after three years of inaction on this file we look forward to seeing your government begin taking steps towards meaningful change.

Internal Trade

As Minister Responsible for Internal Trade, you now have the important responsibility over the ongoing interprovincial trade tensions in Canada. With continued uncertainty surrounding the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), it is now more important than ever that we work to remove internal trade barriers.

The previous Minister responsible for internal trade disappointed many Canadians when the once-promising negotiations initiated by the previous Conservative Government were concluded without significant reductions in trade barriers in many segments of the economy. Your Government settled for an inadequate Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) with 147 pages of exceptions. Simply put, the CFTA failed to meaningfully reduce internal trade barriers and instead established four secretive working groups.

These working groups continue to operate in secret and no reports from these groups have been shared either with Parliament or the Canadian people. Your Government has also refused to release the Internal Trade Barriers Index which was completed for the government by Ernst & Young. I am hopeful you will bring more transparency to this file.

Canadians deserve a strong, national economy which includes the free movement of workers, manufactured goods and natural resources between provinces. In recent weeks, some premiers and provincial trade ministers have shown an interest in eliminating barriers to interprovincial trade. I encourage you to work with the provinces to quickly reach agreements which ensure barrier-free trade for energy, employment, and alcohol.

Please be assured of our collaboration to make progress on common issues for the benefit of all Canadians.

Sincerely,



Alain Rayes, M.P.
Richmond-Arthabaska
Shadow Minister for Intergovernmental Affairs



Cathy McLeod, M.P.
Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo
Shadow Minister for Indigenous and Northern Affairs



John Nater, M.P.
Perth—Wellington
Shadow Secretary for Interprovincial Trade and the Sharing Economy