

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 3, 2015

The Honorable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

We congratulate you on your successful election to the position of Prime Minister of Canada. The state of Montana has a great appreciation for the conducive working relationship we have fostered with our neighbors to the North. We not only share a border, but we frequently work together to address pertinent trade, natural resources, agriculture, and national security concerns. We have found Canada to be a resourceful and respected partner, and it is our sincerest hope that moving forward, we can maintain this rapport. As you begin to identify your nation's priorities, we ask that you take into consideration a few pending issues that are of great importance to our constituents.

The expiration of the Softwood Lumber Agreement (SLA) poses tremendous challenges for Montana's twelve sawmills, millwork, and treating facilities, and five engineered wood and panel product facilities. Our state's wood product industry has been consistent in their message that a new agreement is of necessity. The global market has changed since the agreement's original inception; therefore, we believe it is of utmost importance that we come together as swiftly as possible to identify new terms to the SLA. We urge your administration to deem this agreement as a priority, particularly in light of the challenges both our timber industries face in our local, national, and global markets.

Our countries have also begun separate efforts to identify regional and national priorities prior to the commencement of negotiations for the Columbia River Treaty (CRT). The U.S. State Department recently identified a Chief Negotiator, who along with the U.S. Entity and its Northwest partners, are anxious to begin conversations with counterparts from your administration. We support their efforts to modernize the treaty in a manner that is balanced and reasonable, and ask that our nations come to the table ahead of the treaty's expiration.

Additionally, as you know, the U.S. is Canada's largest wheat export market and Canadian producers compete equally with their U.S. counterparts when exporting into the U.S. As the Canada Grains Act and Varietal Registration System requires imported wheat to be graded at the lowest standard established, the result is that imported U.S. wheat is treated less favorably when compared to Canadian product. We support efforts to establish reciprocal grading standards of wheat and barley between the U.S. and Canada and look forward to working together to resolve this issue.

Lastly, while we remain disappointed by our President's rejection of TransCanada's application to complete the Keystone XL pipeline, you may rest assured this remains a top priority for the people of Montana. We see its merits and understand it is mutually beneficial. Not only would Montana gain much needed direct and indirect jobs to support the pipeline, but our countries would have the capacity to promote mutual economic development and resourcefulness in the face of global uncertainty. We respectfully request that you do not authorize any contingency plans for Keystone XL until our election process is complete.

We look forward to working with you on these issues further and appreciate your consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES
United States Senator



RYAN ZINKE
Member of Congress