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Alberta Chambers of Commerce looking for 'just desserts' in interprovincial trade

The Alberta Chamber of Commerce (ACC) is pleased to learn Premier Ed Stelmach's dinner conversation with Prime Minister Harper will include the issue of improving interprovincial trade.

Alberta and its partner, British Columbia, have reduced interprovincial trade barriers through the Trade, Investment, Labour and Mobility Agreement (TILMA), which has created the second-largest economic region in Canada.

ACC strongly supports TILMA and has been encouraging our province to expand the agreement to other provinces and territories.

Our federation of 127 Chambers of Commerce, which in turn represent more than 22,000 businesses, believes reducing interprovincial trade barriers is vital to creating an efficient and streamlined regulatory environment in which Canadian firms can flourish.

Internal barriers only serve to decrease trade between provinces, encourage regional disparities, and undermine international competitiveness. Estimates on the business costs of provincial trade barriers range as high as \$14 billion a year. This provincial protectionism must be eliminated if we are to create an open, efficient and stable national market.

While TILMA is a positive step to improving interprovincial trade, it only involves two provinces. Premier Stelmach's decision to underline the economic detriments of interprovincial trade barriers during Friday's First Ministers' Meeting will take the issue to the national stage.

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