

WMC: Wisconsin and Ontario Chambers of Commerce reinforce support of free trade

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MADISON AND TORONTO – Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce (WMC) and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) joined together on Wednesday to reinforce their support of free trade and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Both WMC and OCC encouraged their respective governmental leaders to support the renewal of NAFTA during the current renegotiation process.

Trade between Wisconsin and Ontario are critical to both economies – supporting thousands of U.S. and Canadian jobs and billions of dollars in economic output. NAFTA has created a mutually beneficial relationship between the state and province that will continue to provide economic value for both Wisconsin and Ontario.

“WMC is delighted to join with our neighbors to the north in support of free trade and the renewal of NAFTA,” said WMC President & CEO Kurt R. Bauer. “Wisconsin is home to manufacturers, food processors and farmers. All of these industries, and others, are supported by free trade, which creates billions of dollars in economic output and family-supporting careers throughout our state. Our relationship with Ontario and the rest of Canada is vital to Wisconsin’s economic future.”

“Strong cross-border trade partnerships mutually benefit both Ontario and Wisconsin by driving economic growth and increasing competitiveness.” said Rocco Rossi, President and CEO at the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. “The OCC is pleased to join WMC today in support of NAFTA and free trade. We will continue to

work with our Chamber Network, US state chambers and the Ontario government on encouraging the renewal of NAFTA, ensuring prosperity for both our economies.”

Trade is critically important to Wisconsin, contributing US\$22.3 billion to the state’s economy in 2017. In fact, more than 110,000 Wisconsin jobs are supported by exports and 93 percent of those jobs are in manufacturing. Canada is also Wisconsin’s number one trade partner. Wisconsin exported nearly US\$7 billion in goods and services to Canada in 2017 – accounting for almost one-third of the state’s exports.

NAFTA has positively impacted Wisconsin and Ontario and is a key to continued economic success, as trade between the two jurisdictions adds up to Can\$8.4 billion. Key trade sectors between Wisconsin and Ontario include chemical wood pulp, soda or sulphate, engine parts, non-crude petroleum oil, hormones, motor vehicle parts, plastic plates, sheets, toilet paper, paper tissues, towels and food preparations.

Both WMC and OCC believe that trade must continue between Wisconsin and Ontario, and NAFTA renegotiations should strengthen the relationship between the U.S. and Canada.