

## **Council of Atlantic Premiers' meeting communiqué**

### **Atlantic Premiers Working Together for Regional Success**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CHARLOTTETOWN, PEI (January 23, 2019)** - - Economic growth and regulatory cooperation were the key discussion points at a meeting of the four Atlantic Canadian Premiers today.

The 33rd meeting of the Council of Atlantic Premiers was hosted by Prince Edward Island Premier Wade MacLauchlan - who welcomed Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil, New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs, and Newfoundland and Labrador Premier Dwight Ball.

"Today's meeting helped each of us in our collective efforts to build a more prosperous Atlantic Canada – and focused on key areas including collaborative efforts to establish a regional energy/utility corridor, enhanced regulatory alignment, health and trade," Premier MacLauchlan said.

#### **Energy**

Atlantic Premiers recognize there are significant economic development and greenhouse-gas (GHG) reduction opportunities provided by the Atlantic region's clean energy assets and resources. It is essential to maximize our clean energy resources through reliable, efficient and coordinated transmission.

Premiers had extensive discussions on Atlantic clean energy collaboration and agreed to work together toward expanding electrification and developing more sustainable, reliable and affordable electricity in the region.

Premiers agreed to engage with the federal government to seek partnership in a regional transmission system, clean energy infrastructure, smart systems and electrification.

Atlantic Canada has abundant energy resources, many of which align with the growing need for clean, reliable and renewable sources, which need to be maximized for the betterment of the region.

Atlantic Premiers also discussed energy/utility corridors and the important role they may play in ensuring Canadians receive the full value of our natural resources. Premiers recognize there are stranded energy resources in western and eastern Canada and it is essential to move them to national and international markets in the most efficient and environmentally-friendly manner.

## **Regulatory Alignment**

Premiers discussed the benefits of regional collaboration in advancing regulatory efficiency within Atlantic Canada. This ongoing partnership continues to grow and achieve benefits for businesses and citizens. Atlantic Premiers remain committed to strengthening the economy of the region by continuing this work through the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness. Premiers agreed to focus on strengthening Workers Compensation Board processes, enhanced transportation efficiency and improvement to healthcare worker mobility, beginning with regional certifications.

Premiers discussed an excellent example of the regional work towards regulatory and policy alignment of the technical safety trades. This work will yield benefits such as freer movement of highly skilled employees, which in turn will help to streamline inter-provincial trade, and therefore strengthen the regional economy.

## **Health**

Atlantic Canada faces unique challenges in health care delivery, including an aging population and higher-than-average incidences of chronic diseases. Premiers recognize the important role that timely and appropriate access to prescription drugs has in treating disease and improving health outcomes. Over the past decade, the Atlantic Provinces have made significant strides to align formularies and improve access to prescription drug coverage for their residents.

The federal government is currently studying opportunities to create a National Pharmacare Program. Premiers stressed the importance of recognizing the unique needs of Atlantic Canadians, and called on the Prime Minister, and other federal leaders, to make clear their commitment that any initiative includes a defined funding role for the federal government and does not impose new or disproportionate burdens on Atlantic Canadians.

## **International Trade**

Atlantic premiers discussed the challenges and opportunities for the regional economy related to recent trade developments.

Atlantic provinces continue to advocate and promote the interests of Atlantic companies, workers and educational institutions in key markets, including the United States, Asia and the Europe.

Atlantic Premiers discussed opportunities to further diversify Atlantic Canadian exports, including through the market-opening opportunities presented by the Comprehensive Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and Canada European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA).

Atlantic provinces will collaborate in areas of common interests in an effort to further support business growth and job creation by leveraging the opportunities in the global marketplace.

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