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Wild Rose

Wild Rose Report

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ECONOMY, SECURITY SERVED IN NEW 'BEYOND THE BORDER' DEAL

The most significant step forward in Canada-U.S. co-operation since the ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement happened last month when our Conservative Government agreed to a new border vision with our largest trading partner.

Since 9/11, our two countries' borders have thickened as a result of security protocols to protect the safety of our respective citizens. But the need for enhanced security has had the unwelcome side-effect of slowing down legitimate trade and travel between Canada and the U.S., which has in turn cost the Canadian economy jobs and billions in trade.

The new agreement with the U.S., called the Beyond the Border Action Plan, takes steps to restore the speedy flow of trade and travel between our countries, while improving security in North America as a whole.

The agreement acts to secure the perimeter of North America against outside threats in order to free up the flow of people, goods and services inside the continent and across our shared border. It will, among other things, eliminate some present-day duplication of security checks between the countries by pre-clearing some goods and people to cross the border. It also co-ordinates regulations in order to cut delays caused by red-tape.

These plans do not change Canada's privacy laws. Under the security deal, each country maintains its own privacy rules and there will be no infringement by one nation on the sovereignty of the other.

What it does do is remove some of the hurdles now in place that are affecting the nearly \$1 Trillion in annual bilateral trade and investment between the world's greatest trading partners. Hundreds of thousands of people and billions of dollars worth of goods in trade cross the Canada-U.S. border every day. A deal that accelerates the legitimate flow of that trade and travel between our two countries, while addressing our shared security concerns is in the best interests of Canadians.

Our Government's top priority remains completing the economic recovery and helping to create jobs. A shared commitment to security that improves our access to our largest and most important trading partner is key to achieving that goal.