



## Report: Investments in Canada's Trade Infrastructure Necessary to Maintain Competitiveness in North America and beyond.

### Media Release

**Ottawa, June 28, 2016** – In a time of heightened international competition, Canada's transport infrastructure requires significant investment to maintain our trade competitiveness to international markets - including the key U.S. and Mexico markets. Canada's export-based economy relies upon efficient roads, ports, waterways, railways, airports and pipelines to move Canadian products and services. In a new report released today, *The Infrastructure that Matters Most* (insert link), the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the Canada West Foundation make the case for the need to invest in trade-enabling infrastructure.

"This week, Prime Minister Trudeau will be meeting with President Obama and President Peña Nieto for the North American Leaders' Summit in Ottawa. Whether they discuss furthering their goals of creating jobs or talk about building a clean growth economy for North America, improved trade infrastructure must play a key role in reaching those objectives," said the Hon. Perrin Beatty, President and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. "When trucks are idling on a highway because of a sinkhole or planes are queuing to take off because there's a lack of usable runways, that is costing business money and uselessly pumping CO2 in our atmosphere," he continued.

With the majority of Canada's national income tied to trade, the absence of a clear commitment from the Canadian government to make trade infrastructure an equal priority amongst their new infrastructure commitments stands out as a missed opportunity to help improve Canada's international trade competitiveness. Placing trade infrastructure an equal priority with social, transit and green infrastructure in the new federal infrastructure plan will increase Canada's collective wealth and help to reverse its infrastructure decline where it matters most.

"So far, this kind of infrastructure has not been the focus on the funding the federal government has announced. We call on the federal and provincial governments to recognize that export infrastructure is a huge wealth generator for us, the engine that lets us pay for our social programs and quality of life," Mr. Beatty said.

Trade infrastructure should be a competitive advantage given our country's history and success with initiatives like the Pacific Gateway. For Canadian to be able to prosper with the government's push to open markets around the Pacific rim Canada must become a more competitive exporter and that means building on our advantage in moving products to market and not losing ground to more aggressive competitors who are making trade infrastructure a priority.

"According to the World Economic Forum Competitiveness Index, Canada has fallen from the 10<sup>th</sup> rank in overall infrastructure quality, in 2008-2009, to the 23<sup>rd</sup> rank in 2015-2016. This is a dangerous trend that must be reversed as quickly as possible," said Mr. Beatty. "Canada is in the process of concluding key trade agreements with Europe and with the countries in the Pacific Rim, including our partners the U.S. and Mexico. For these trade agreements to be most beneficial for Canada, we must be able to take full advantage of them which means getting our goods and services to our customers by land, air and sea, as efficiently as possible."

There is the infrastructure we want like parks and hockey rinks, the infrastructure we need like schools and hospitals and then there is the infrastructure that pays for these things and that is trade infrastructure.

--

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce is the vital connection between business and the federal government. It helps shape public policy and decision-making to the benefit of businesses, communities and families across Canada with a network of over 450 chambers of commerce and boards of trade, representing 200,000 businesses of all sizes in all sectors of the economy and in all regions. News and information are available at [Chamber.ca](http://Chamber.ca) or follow us on Twitter [@CdnChamberofCom](https://twitter.com/CdnChamberofCom)

- 30-

Contact:

Guillaume (Will) Dubreuil  
Director, Public Affairs and Media Relations  
Canadian Chamber of Commerce  
613.797.1860  
[gdubreuil@chamber.ca](mailto:gdubreuil@chamber.ca)