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# Standing Committee on International Trade

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Chair: Judy A. Sgro





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• (1540)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.)):** I call the meeting to order.

This is meeting number 11 of the Standing Committee on International Trade.

Welcome to our witnesses today. We appreciate your coming in person and sharing your thoughts and ideas with us.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) and the motion adopted by the committee on Thursday, September 18, 2025, the committee is resuming its study of Canada and the forthcoming CUSMA review.

We have with us today, from the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, Deborah Yedlin, president and chief executive officer by video conference. From the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, we have Doug Griffiths, president and chief executive officer, and from Forest Products Association of Canada, we have Eric Johnson, vice-president, federal government relations.

Welcome to you all.

We will start with opening remarks of up to five minutes. You'll see me raise my hand or just push the button to cut you off when your five minutes are up in order to allow the committee members sufficient time to ask their questions.

We will start with Ms. Yedlin, please.

**Deborah Yedlin (President and Chief Executive Officer, Calgary Chamber of Commerce):** Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the committee.

My name is Deborah Yedlin, and I am the president and CEO of the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, which represents 1,700 members and approximately 400,000 Calgarians. I'm joining you today from Calgary, which is on Treaty 7 territory, comprising the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy, the Tsuut'ina Nation, the Stoney Nakoda and the homeland of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government of Alberta, districts 5 and 6.

On behalf of our member businesses, I appreciate the opportunity to speak about Canada's trade relationship with the United States and Mexico as it pertains to the forthcoming CUSMA review, which is a critical moment for North America's economic future.

The Calgary Chamber of Commerce represents a diverse cross-section of businesses—from small family enterprises to global energy producers and aviation, agriculture, telecommunications and technology firms. While their sectors differ, the message is consis-

tent: Certainty, stability and access to markets are essential to investment, growth and jobs.

CUSMA has delivered significant, measurable benefits since it came into force. It has preserved duty-free market access for Canadian goods and services, supported record levels of cross-border trade and investment and provided certainty through dispute resolutions mechanisms, like chapter 19.

However, the global landscape has changed dramatically since 2020. Geopolitical tensions, supply chain realignments and growing economic nationalism are reshaping how and where goods move. In this environment, a strong, predictable North American partnership is not just about trade; it's about economic and energy security.

The upcoming review is not a formality. It is a critical moment to strengthen and modernize CUSMA. The agreement must evolve to reflect today's economic and geopolitical realities and to ensure that North America remains competitive in a rapidly changing world.

From the perspective of our business community, there are four priorities Canada should champion in the review.

First is energy security and cross-border investment. Canada supplied 60% of the U.S. crude imports in 2023. This is a reminder that our economies are deeply integrated. This translates into \$87 billion in energy exports from Alberta. Maintaining clear rules of origin for energy products and restoring investor confidence in cross-border infrastructure are essential. At the same time, we must strengthen collaboration on clean energy and emerging technologies—from carbon capture and hydrogen to nuclear power—so North America leads in both energy security and decarbonization.

Second, we need to secure integrated supply chains for critical minerals. With demand expected to double or quadruple by 2040, we need rules that recognize the full North American value chain, from extraction to manufacturing of Canada's mineral wealth, especially in Alberta and Saskatchewan. By doing so, we will reduce dependence on non-aligned nations and ensure resilience in industries like batteries, EVs and advanced manufacturing. This includes downstream facilities as being part of this strategy.

Third, we need to focus on facilitating labour mobility. Persistent labour shortages, especially in the skilled trades, health care and technology sectors, are limiting growth. The CUSMA professionals list must be updated to reflect emerging occupations, such as AI specialists, cybersecurity experts and renewable energy engineers. Also, development of reciprocal credential recognition and streamlined processes for short-term business travel and cross-border project work will strengthen supply chains and innovation across borders.

Finally, we need to secure predictability in trade. Businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, need certainty that tariffs and other trade barriers will not disrupt their operations. For many small exporters, low-value thresholds allow goods to move across the U.S. border without duties. When the U.S. reduced the de minimis threshold in 2025, it created additional costs and slowed shipments, directly affecting small businesses that lack the resources to absorb these costs and disruptions. Small and medium-sized enterprises contribute 42% of Alberta's exports to the United States. Predictable, rules-based trade is essential for these businesses to plan, invest and participate confidently in North American supply chains.

In closing, CUSMA has been an anchor of North American prosperity, but its success cannot be taken for granted. As Canada heads into the joint review, we have an opportunity and obligation to ensure that the agreement remains modern, fair and forward-looking.

By focusing on energy security, supply chain resilience, labour mobility and trade predictability, Canada can strengthen its competitive position and reaffirm its role as a reliable partner and indispensable neighbour in North America.

Thank you, Madam Chair. I look forward to the questions.

• (1545)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Griffiths, go ahead. You have up to five minutes.

**Doug Griffiths (President and Chief Executive Officer, Edmonton Chamber of Commerce):** Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

My name is Doug Griffiths, president and CEO of the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce.

I'm here on behalf of the chamber's 2,000-member organizations and the broader community of 38,000 Edmonton businesses whose success depends on a stable and accessible North American market.

Businesses and consumers across Canada are concerned. We commend the efforts the Government of Canada has taken to reas-

sure businesses and safeguard Canada's relationship with the United States even before the CUSMA negotiations commence.

Canada's relationship with the United States is the backbone of our economy, as each day Canada-U.S. trade supports about 3.3 million Canadian jobs. In my home province of Alberta, around 90% of the province's exports go to the United States, the highest in the entire country.

The integration of the Canadian and U.S. economies has never been more evident. Companies of all sizes now operate across both countries. Products often cross the border multiple times before reaching consumers, while employees travel frequently to collaborate, deliver services and sustain operations. For example, Edmonton's Little Potato Company offers a clear example of this. It manages a fully integrated North American supply chain, with its Canadian headquarters and production based in the Edmonton region, and its U.S. processing facility and head office located in DeForest, Wisconsin. The company's success depends on strong cross-border relationships. It sources from growers in both countries, employs workers across both economies and supplies retailers throughout North America.

We're pleased to see the government has maintained strong relations and open communications with the U.S. and Mexico. As Canada enters the next round of CUSMA negotiations, protecting and deepening those trusted cross-border relationships must be a central priority. To the extent possible, Canada should protect CUSMA's existing core provisions as they provide predictability and stability for businesses operating across the border.

In 2024, 76% of Canada's goods exports went to the United States and two-way trade surpassed \$1 trillion for the third consecutive year. Canada remains the top export market for more than 30 U.S. states, and we remain critical to their success as well.

When tariffs were announced earlier this year, I reached out to my counterparts in several U.S. capital city chambers. A clear consensus emerged: We must keep the border friction-free and the rules clear. Canada and American businesses, and the chambers of commerce that represent them, agree that free trade is the right path forward. We recognize and appreciate that this is also the goal of the Canadian government.

We all know that no one wins a trade war. Protectionism and uncertainty hurt businesses, workers and communities on both sides of the border. The current trade dispute was not of Canada's making, but it has created an opportunity for resolution. Over the past nine months, we've seen how vulnerable our country can be and our economy can be and why Canadian businesses must diversify their supply chains and export markets. To do that, they need the right support and right policy environment.

As CUSMA discussions begin, Canada must secure a stable, rules-based framework. If tariffs remain, they should be clearly defined, time limited and carry meaningful penalties for unilateral changes.

A concrete way to ensure open and reliable trade is to establish a rapid-response mechanism for tariff escalation in the next CUSMA. This would require minister-level talks within seven days of any new trade measure to prevent sudden tariffs that raise costs, create uncertainty and weaken confidence in cross-border trade.

We recognize that on October 23, Prime Minister Mark Carney announced the goal of doubling Canada's non-U.S. exports over the next decade. That's an important step toward long-term diversification and building a strong business community, and it deserves support. It's also clear that businesses need a two-pronged approach, swift resolution to U.S. trade challenges and long-term diversification of supply chains and export markets. Both are essential. Canada's chambers of commerce and world trade centre organizations are well-placed to help government advance these goals.

Canada's eight largest metropolitan chambers in Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax, collectively known as the Canadian Global Cities Council, represent businesses and cities that together account for roughly 10 million Canadians. These organizations are often the first point of contact for businesses that maintain strong local connections and possess deep knowledge of the challenges and opportunities facing communities. This network can and should be leveraged and expanded into a national platform, providing practical concierge-style interprovincial and international trade services to small and medium-sized enterprises, helping them navigate rules of origin, trusted trader programs, labelling requirements and access to new markets.

● (1550)

In closing, Canada's prosperity depends on trusted relationships, robust trade and strong, collaborative business communities across North America.

We highly recommend that you ensure open and reliable trade. To the extent possible, Canada should protect CUSMA's existing core services, which ensure predictable trade, investment and growth across North America; strengthen engagement with U.S. states beyond federal channels; and pilot a concierge trade service program through Canada's world trade centre network.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Griffiths.

We'll go on to Mr. Johnson, please.

**Eric Johnson (Vice-President, Federal Government Relations, Forest Products Association of Canada):** Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the committee.

My name is Eric Johnson. I'm the vice-president of the Forest Products Association of Canada. We represent the companies that manufacture Canada's lumber, pulp and paper, and forest-based bio-products.

Collectively, our sector directly employs over 200,000 people in every region of the country, and we support another 200,000 jobs indirectly. We contribute approximately \$22 billion to Canada's GDP, and we export \$37 billion in products every year. That makes forestry one of Canada's top four export industries and the economic backbone of more 300 communities across the country.

For Canada's forest sector, the forthcoming CUSMA review is not just a procedural exercise; it's a strategic moment to re-establish confidence, fairness and predictability in the North American trading system.

For too long, forestry has existed at the margins of our continental trade framework, excluded from the discipline, rules, protection and predictability that apply to other sectors in CUSMA.

The result has been damaging and enduring. Since 2017, Canadian exporters have paid over \$10 billion in duties, which now sit in the U.S. treasury. Average combined rates are now at 35%, and newly applied section 232 tariffs add an additional 10% to lumber and 25% to furniture and cabinets.

These aren't policy differences. These are structural failures that continue to punish a sector fundamental to Canada's economy and North America's housing market.

Forestry cannot remain an unresolved bilateral irritant. We should be recognized as a strategic pillar of North American competitiveness. Our mills supply over 90% of the lumber imported by the U.S. When our trade relationship breaks down, homebuilding slows, housing costs rise and workers on both sides of the border lose.

For Canada, resolving this dispute is about more than a tariff line; it's about anchoring the rules of fair trade in the products that literally build our continent. The CUSMA review is the opportunity to make that happen.

Specifically, FPAC urges the Government of Canada to secure a durable softwood lumber settlement under the CUSMA umbrella to provide long-term certainty for producers, workers and communities; end the misuse of the national security tariffs and codify protection against their future application to integrated resource sectors; and reinforce the integrity of the dispute settlement process through binding timelines and enforceable rulings that prevent cases from being stalled indefinitely.

These are not new ideas. They are overdue fixes to ensure that Canada's most trade-exposed manufacturing sector can operate under predictable rules-based conditions.

Canada's forest sector is not seeking special treatment; it's asking to compete on a level playing field. A modernized CUSMA should be forward-looking in aligning standards, accelerating product innovation and rewarding low-carbon, responsibly sourced materials.

A continental approach to forestry can underpin North America's housing affordability, climate resilience and industrial competitiveness. Every home built in the U.S. supports U.S. construction jobs and Canadian forest jobs. A fair, stable trading framework will deliver growth, investment and even energy security across the region, in particular for rural and remote communities in Canada.

The Government of Canada's recent \$1.2-billion package offers some stability, but programs and loans don't substitute for market access. What will restore investment and confidence is a clear strategy towards a durable trade resolution, backed by political focus at the highest levels.

Canada must approach the 2026 review with a whole-of-government mandate, treating softwood lumber and forest products as integral to CUSMA's success and the wider prosperity of North America, not an exception to it. The world is watching to see whether Canada can secure fairness for its most renewable and low-carbon export sector.

The forest sector has been a dependable partner in Canada's prosperity for over a century. It's ready to be a partner again in shaping a renewed North American trade framework that works for workers, communities and consumers on both sides of the border.

We ask the committee to underscore that forestry must be central to Canada's CUSMA priorities—not as a historical grievance but as a modern opportunity to strengthen competitiveness, stability and economic security across North America.

● (1555)

Thank you. I look forward to your questions.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Jeneroux, you have the floor for six minutes, please.

● (1600)

**Matt Jeneroux (Edmonton Riverbend, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for joining us here today.

I always threaten to pass a motion to have more Edmontonians here, Madam Chair, but you're doing it without my motion.

I want to welcome you, Mr. Griffiths, to committee. It's good to see you. Thanks for the work you do for Edmonton.

An interesting statistic that you mentioned is that about 76% of businesses in Canada send their products to or do trade with the United States. I suspect that's probably changed in the last little bit. I would love to get the Edmonton numbers if you have them.

I'm more interested in some of the work that you've been doing with the U.S. chambers. I think you're doing some of the work on behalf of the government, reaching out to the chambers. I'm just curious. Is there a response similar to what we'd expect—that the tariffs are also impacting them at a significant level?

**Doug Griffiths:** Yes. I appreciate the question.

Edmonton does export lots of goods primarily to U.S. markets, like the rest of Alberta. With our softwood lumber and oil and gas, 90% of what we export goes to the United States across Alberta. The tariffs are having an incredibly significant impact, especially for us. We're not the corporate office centre. We're the labour centre. We produce the goods. We have the businesses that are actually doing the work. With the slowdown, it's a growing challenge.

On the work I did with other chambers of commerce and calling them, the feedback, I would say, was universal with concerns. The only difference was that some were very open about the negative impacts of the reduction of free trade and having a porous border. They were very open about it. Others said that they couldn't say anything. They were very concerned, but if they ever said something, they were a little concerned about their own viability over the long term—not from us but internally. That just registers that businesses know how critical free trade is to the economy, and they desperately are hoping for a resolution on their side so we can return to work as normal.

**Matt Jeneroux:** That's interesting. Thanks for doing that work.

In the Province of Alberta's 2025 Speech from the Throne, they indicated that the “vast majority of Alberta exports”—I think the words were—to the United States remain tariff-free, but they're worried about potential sweeping changes that could come at a whim.

Are you hearing about that inconsistency from your members?

**Doug Griffiths:** Consistency is the key to anything in business. I run my own small business, and consistency is what gives you a surety for investments in capital and your operations. Even if it's a bad circumstance, consistency is better than a good circumstance that could change at any minute, because of the risk to capital and the risk to those investments.

Given that the free trade agreement is still in place and most of the goods are travelling consistently and freely, the concern that the President, frankly, could on a whim decide that things are going to change is what's chilling the market, investments and our economy. This is especially in Edmonton, I can say, because that's where I'm from. Lots of businesses are concerned about what happens next month or next year, not just with CUSMA but with the President changing his mind. Even when they have access to markets now and free trade is continuing, they're holding off on those investments for fear that something could change, which is having an even bigger negative impact on our economy than anything the President of the United States could do.

It's not those businesses' fault. It's just practical. It's why we need some security and stability.

**Matt Jeneroux:** You touched in your presentation, too, on the long-term diversification policy, in particular the role that the world trade centres could or should be playing in cities across the country.

When everyone seems to be looking to go to different markets, I get from your testimony that you're looking to stay within Canada and to support and enhance lots of the local businesses here. Perhaps you can touch on some of the work that you're looking at.

**Doug Griffiths:** Out of a 179 active world trade centres in the world, six of them are located in Canada. Alberta doesn't have one. The Edmonton Chamber of Commerce currently is the world trade centre. It's just a moniker on the building right now. Last year, towards the end of the year, we made a pitch and presentation both to the federal government and to our provincial government about igniting the world trade centre to help with interprovincial free trade. I had 13 years in government in the province of Alberta working with our previous premier, Ed Stelmach. He worked on interprovincial free trade within western Canada. He made some great gains there.

I think it has been an untapped potential. We've had a very porous border with the United States that was barrier-free for such a long time. I think sometimes it has made us complacent. I pitched that we could ignite the world trade centre in Edmonton and work on interprovincial free trade. We're still working on those two applications with the federal and provincial government in partnership. I think there is incredible potential to work our way out of this by focusing on it. Even if the situation is resolved with CUSMA, the negotiations go fine and the chaos disappears, I still think it's something that's critically important that this country needs to work on.

• (1605)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We're on to Madame Lapointe.

[*Translation*]

**Linda Lapointe (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for being here, and I welcome them to the committee. It's a great pleasure to have them here.

My riding is north of Montreal. It is very well represented in the agri-food processing sector. There are also a lot of SMEs and businesses in the aerospace sector.

My question is for both Mr. Griffiths and Ms. Yedlin.

What I'd like to know is how does western Canada view the economic complementarity of regions, such as Quebec's, in the renegotiation of CUSMA, the Canada-United States-Mexico free trade agreement?

[*English*]

**Doug Griffiths:** If I understood the question correctly, I can testify that our businesses in Edmonton and all of those I know across western Canada—as the CEO of the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce but also after spending 13 years in the provincial legislature in Alberta working with my colleagues in other jurisdictions across Canada—have a foundational and fundamental belief that we need to succeed together. Canada is going to be stronger together. We can't sacrifice one sector of the economy for another, one sector of Canada or one part of Canada for another. We have the ability, as long as we stand together, to capture an entire world that is desperately seeking the economic resources, opportunities, expertise and innovation that Canada has to offer. It would be short-sighted to think that we need to compromise one sector for the other. I think we can do this together. Our long-term prosperity is going to require us to do that.

[*Translation*]

**Linda Lapointe:** Thank you, Mr. Griffiths.

Ms. Yedlin, what do you think?

[*English*]

**Deborah Yedlin:** Thank you.

I just want to point out that we, in Calgary especially, are working to develop an aerospace hub. We are attracting investment from other defence industries.

Doug is absolutely right. We have to work together. We have to make sure that we can leverage each other's strengths from coast to coast to coast. Whether that is in aerospace and defence, whether it is in agriculture or whether it is in clean tech and AI—we know, of course, that Montreal is a hub for AI—there is so much going on across this country.

I just want to say that there's so much transactional friction we've had to deal with as a country because of all the interprovincial trade barriers. This is something that is deemed to be one of the easier levers to pull in terms of accelerating economic growth in Canada. Decreasing transactional friction will decrease costs and increase labour mobility. We absolutely need to make sure that it's something we do, along with, of course, leveraging the industries that we have on both sides, whether you're in Alberta or in Quebec.

[Translation]

**Linda Lapointe:** Thank you, Ms. Yedlin.

I have a question for you, Mr. Johnson.

Quebec and western Canada have a common interest, which is softwood lumber. We, too, in Quebec, have a lot of it.

How is your association preparing to defend Canadian interests on this issue?

[English]

**Eric Johnson:** Listen, it's been a long-standing irritant. Quite frankly, you need to negotiate with two parties willing to negotiate in order to come to an agreement. We have advocated strongly for supports to the sector. We saw in September the Prime Minister announce a package of \$1.2 billion for the industry. That is a good first step, but as things have sped up and increased tariffs have been added to lumber, we'd like to see governments come together with industry to work through what a true solution may look like.

The industry has never been more coordinated and collaborative across the nation. We look forward to working with the government to help them negotiate with the U.S. and to find solutions here in Canada. There is still a lot we can do on the regulatory front. There's a lot we can do on buildings and coding. There is a lot we can do on market access. All of those are portions of what we can do in terms of a single agreement with the U.S. that promotes durable trade. We can derisk and we can move pieces of what we trade to the U.S., but ultimately a negotiated settlement is where we'd like to land.

• (1610)

[Translation]

**Linda Lapointe:** I have more questions for the chambers of commerce.

In Quebec and elsewhere in Canada, the compliance rules of CUSMA, the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, are causing problems for a number of exporting SMEs.

Do you think there should be more harmonization of federal programs to support interprovincial innovation? How could we improve that?

[English]

**Doug Griffiths:** Yes. I would say that we do need to harmonize.

I also think that something the federal government could do is step up with some concierge service. A lot of small and medium-sized enterprises don't have the capacity or the resources available to navigate CUSMA. Rather than waiting to identify problems further down the road, some sort of concierge service to navigate and negotiate through those processes would help our businesses access the U.S. markets, but at the same time would also help them scale up faster. One of our challenges with competition with the United States is that in Canada we don't scale up fast enough to be competitive. That will take some coordination, not just between our jurisdictions in our economies but federally too in order to help make sure we're competitive.

[Translation]

**Linda Lapointe:** Thank you, Mr. Griffiths.

[English]

**The Chair:** Mr. Savard-Tremblay, you have six minutes.

[Translation]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot—Acton, BQ):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to thank all the witnesses for being here.

My first question is for the Forest Products Association of Canada representative.

I want to make sure I understand the following. We're talking more and more about market diversification. In addition, we know that 78% of forest product exports from Canada and Quebec go to the United States.

If we were to diversify markets, which ports would be helpful in getting our products to other destinations? Could using these ports for the domestic market be an option?

[English]

**Eric Johnson:** The reality is that on the domestic side, we use about 3% of our lumber supply to satisfy all our housing needs. If we were to build 500,000 homes a year, we could incrementally bring that up to about 4% or 5%. We need to look at industrial construction—hospitals, schools and that type of construction—and then building taller. In some regions, we have up to 18 storeys and in other regions we don't. Can we build to 21? In some countries they allow that. We're not there yet.

The other piece is how we use the wood in that construction environment. In fact, if you were to think of a building at its core, you could use steel and a concrete shell and wood floors, and that would be potentially your biggest market share increase for wood construction in an industrial or high-rise environment. When you talk about market diversification, at one point we were selling 3.5 billion board feet of wood to China. That's about a quarter of what we currently sell to the U.S. As we saw Russia start to flood the Chinese market and those dynamics shift, all of that supply ended up going to the U.S., so we were less diversified.

We are working with trade officials in Japan, in Korea, in Europe and in Mexico. As the U.S. claims they're going to be self-sustaining, they're going to move out of some of those areas in terms of the trade they give. Can we move in? As we look to build Ukraine and Gaza, Europe is going to supply a lot of that wood. Is there an opportunity for Canada to take some of that market share?

The answer to your question is that I don't know exactly what that market share will potentially look like. It will take decades to get there.

• (1615)

[Translation]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** If I understand correctly, you're saying that we need to do secondary and tertiary processing, but that we also need to increase the use of wood in the construction of non-residential buildings.

At the expense of what materials would that increase be made? Currently, what percentage of materials used in non-residential construction is wood? In an ideal world, to what extent do you think we could increase the percentage of wood in these buildings?

[English]

**Eric Johnson:** I don't have the specific stats for that, but I can find that for you and get back to you.

[Translation]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Yes, that would be interesting.

At the expense of which materials would the increased use of wood primarily occur? Would it be at the expense of concrete?

[English]

**Eric Johnson:** Not necessarily. I think what would happen is that there would be market shifts in some of that construction. I don't think that there would be a massive decrease in the amount of material. It would just be that, as we're building more and more, we would see the opportunity to use wood in conjunction with concrete and steel.

[Translation]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** In fact, if I'm not mistaken, it has been shown that wood buildings create more cool islands in cities than concrete buildings. Wood construction contributes more to an acceptable climate, if I'm not mistaken.

Can you confirm that?

[English]

**Eric Johnson:** There have been studies on how individuals and people react to seeing wood in their environments. It also tends to be a better insulator as well as a better cooling agent in construction. That would be correct.

[Translation]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** As a result, the increased use of wood on the domestic market would even bring benefits in terms of ecology and well-being.

[English]

**Eric Johnson:** Yes, I would agree with that statement. Also, if you look at using wood, from just an environmental and ecosystem perspective, the more we use, the better we are at controlling wildfires and other areas that aren't necessarily connected to that building too.

[Translation]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** In short, in addition to secondary and tertiary processing, there should be a public program for awarding contracts for the construction of non-residential buildings that use more wood. That would be helpful.

[English]

**Eric Johnson:** It would help, yes.

[Translation]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** We know that you want an agreement to be reached quickly, given the American political context. I take it, though, that you prefer no deal to a bad deal. You're the ones who could tell us. However, you're saying that you want an agreement quickly and that this is what would help you.

Do you think a lasting agreement could be reached before the review of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement? Does such an agreement have to be entered into as part of the agreement?

Also, is the dispute settlement mechanism set out in chapter 31 of CUSMA sufficient to challenge U.S. tariffs? We know that, in the current form of the dispute settlement mechanism, the problem isn't winning in the courts, because Canada always wins against the United States in the courts. The problem is more the fact that time is poorly regulated.

[English]

**The Chair:** Please give a brief answer.

**Eric Johnson:** Listen we paid 10 billion dollars' worth of duties into the United States treasury already. We need a negotiated settlement to that challenge, which has been ongoing for the last nine years.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. McKenzie, go ahead, please, for five minutes.

**David McKenzie (Calgary Signal Hill, CPC):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Ms. Yedlin, you mentioned critical minerals. To my general understanding, we have deposits across various provinces in Canada, but you mentioned specifically Alberta and Saskatchewan. We've heard testimony over the course of a number of hearings here in Ottawa about the importance that critical minerals play and could play in terms of a negotiating position, bluntly, leverage when it comes to our negotiations and discussions with the United States. My concern is that in our current regulatory circumstance the prospect of critical mineral development is somewhat hollow.

I wonder if you have any views on Bill C-69 specifically and what it means for project development.

• (1620)

**Deborah Yedlin:** Thank you for the question.

Of course, Bill C-69 and the challenges regarding resource development broadly speaking have been a barrier to development and attracting capital. Quite frankly, companies will not risk capital if there's no certainty that they will be able to develop the resource they want to develop, whether it's energy or critical minerals and mining.

We know that the time it takes to have a mine approved in Canada is far too long, at 16 years and counting; however, the U.S. number is actually 29 years on average—just to put it out there. The point is that we have significant critical mineral deposits in Alberta and Saskatchewan: lithium, cobalt and nickel.

I also would like to point out that the bilateral mineral trade between Canada and the U.S. was valued at \$142 billion last year. We need to not only develop our critical minerals but also develop our processing capacity, because otherwise we're still beholden to other jurisdictions to process what we mine here.

It is important to decrease the regulatory time frames associated with the development and to accelerate the permitting process, but we also need to develop processing facilities, which is another conversation.

**David McKenzie:** Ms. Yedlin, we recently saw the opening of the Major Projects Office in Calgary. I don't know if you've had a chance to visit, but it strikes me that if we can reform the foundational legislation, including Bill C-69, we're not going to need a Major Projects Office.

**Deborah Yedlin:** I think if we can have a place where major projects do start, it actually goes back to what my colleague Mr. Griffiths alluded to in terms of a concierge service. If we can actually have something in one place that the major projects are being funnelled through and there's a consistent, predictable process associated with those projects in terms of the time frames and the regulatory frameworks that they're subject to, it actually gives clarity and certainty to investors and companies in terms of risking capital.

What we're talking about is the fact that we need to risk capital for decades, not for an election cycle, and it's really critical that we have that clarity. If we can get some amendments to Bill C-69—in fact, the chamber's having a round table with members next week to discuss this very issue—this will go a long way to making sure that companies come back to the table and are comfortable risking capital, because we know that until there's a resolution from a certainty perspective and a regulatory perspective, and there are clear

time frames, nobody's risking a dime. That's across the board—mining, energy, you name it.

**David McKenzie:** Do you hear from your members about what type of time frame they expect? Are we talking two years or three years as a reasonable time frame to address environmental concerns and to address community concerns where projects are to be developed? Do your members give you feedback on that question?

**Deborah Yedlin:** They do, but I think it depends on what kind of project we're talking about. Obviously, we want to have the shortest possible time frame to make sure that all the stakeholders and the assessments that affect the area are completed.

We also know that we've made significant strides in our relations with first nations communities. Whether it's the Alberta Indigenous Opportunities Corporation or the federal program that's been put in place, this is also a mechanism to really be able to accelerate our consultations. It's also very important in terms of being able to further accelerate the approval process, because we have a very different approach than we've had in the past, which is critical.

**David McKenzie:** I have one last question on this subject matter—

**The Chair:** You have 20 seconds if you can squeeze it in.

**David McKenzie:** —about the interest of expanding our exports of traditional energy with an oil pipeline to tidewater that could be in a couple of different directions and also expanding liquefied natural gas export capacity.

**Deborah Yedlin:** It's absolutely critical. When we look at it from an economic standpoint, one of the easiest levers we have to pull as a country to generate economic growth and increase productivity is to make sure we can allow the energy sector to develop its resources and make sure we increase liquefied natural gas exports.

LNG Canada's phase one has a carbon footprint 50% lower than any other LNG facility right now, so let's build on that and, of course, increase the exports to tidewater.

If anybody wants to follow Rory Johnston on X, there's a very good graphic that shows how much more oil we're exporting to China as a result of the Trans Mountain pipeline, so there's a lot to build on in terms of exports to other markets, and there could be an opportunity for us because shale's peaking in the United States. That's a different conversation, again, in terms of exports and—

• (1625)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We'll go to Mr. Fonseca, please.

**Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East—Cooksville, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses.

All the witnesses who have come to our committee have brought a very positive and pragmatic approach to improving CUSMA from a good agreement to a better agreement with the United States.

I heard Ms. Yedlin talk about credential recognition, labour mobility and extraction to manufacturing. Of course, we have the chambers here.

Mr. Griffiths, you brought up those you represent, your 2,000 members, the 38,000 businesses in Edmonton. It's wonderful to have the chambers because they represent a swath of all of our business community—small and medium-sized enterprises and our large businesses—and are able to bring that perspective to the table.

On that, what I've heard here from your testimony is that what serves us best is a team Canada approach. That is all business, all levels of government and labour, everybody working together with that same approach.

Mr. Griffiths and Ms. Yedlin, with you both being from Alberta, to ensure Alberta's interests are represented, how do we do that best while still keeping that strong, unified approach? I'd like to get your perspectives with your being from both Calgary and Edmonton—from Alberta.

**Doug Griffiths:** If I can have the opportunity to go first, Deb...

We sometimes get this notion that we're competing against the rest of Canada, and we're not. We're competing against the rest of the world. There are some foundational and fundamental principles that are important for our economy and our economic success across the country that don't count on jurisdiction.

Deb answered this in the last question, but time is money for businesses, so the faster processes go.... Taking more time does not mean a better consultation. Taking more time does not mean better environmental guidelines. You can still do it thoroughly but with a notion that time is money, so we can speed up our processes while still doing a good job of consultation.

That time is money also applies to the infrastructure investments we have across this country. There should be a foundational principle that every single business in this country, regardless of the jurisdiction, has access to tidewater, with railroad, runway and pipelines. That allows all of Canada to be more progressive and more innovative, as well as for its businesses to grow more. In that way, not only can we get our goods to market, but we can also grow faster and invest with the understanding that we're going to have consistency in our processes with our regulations, with our guidelines for consultation on the environment and with getting our products to market, wherever we are in this country.

If we adopt principles such as those, I don't think it matters where we are in this country. We need to really focus on the collaboration. Again, we're not competing against each other; we're competing against the rest of the world. The way our provinces approach it is very internally focused, which is what has made us vul-

nerable to this tariff war. We need to undo that, and we need to do it now.

**Peter Fonseca:** Thank you, Mr. Griffiths.

We've heard the Prime Minister say that we're going to have to do things at speeds we've never seen before.

I'd also like to hear Ms. Yedlin's take in terms of a team Canada, unified approach and how best to do that.

**Deborah Yedlin:** Well, if you want to go fast, you go by yourself. If you want to go far, you go together. We have to work together as a country to make sure we can go as far as we can.

I just want to say, as someone who is a former investment banker and who covered the business sector for 20 years as a journalist, I know capital goes to where it can get the best return. We compete the world over for attracting that capital, and we haven't done a very good job of that over the last while. In order to make sure that we have certainty for investment, we need to be able to have a regulatory system that underpins the attraction of capital to develop our resources and to look at the way we develop our infrastructure.

We're turning over a new chapter in Canada's economic history. It is not negotiable. Failure is not an option. I really think that the only way we get to where we need to go as a country, to increase our economic growth and productivity, is to work on it together.

**Peter Fonseca:** What is the best way to get that message through to the Trump administration—that it's for our mutual prosperity and that it's for our mutual security here in North America?

**Deborah Yedlin:** I know that we have very active negotiations and connections going on right now, but I also note, to Doug's point, that it's really important for us to continue to interact with the states we trade with on an individual level. They also feel the impact of the tariffs. If we can address that issue, they can also put pressure on the administration to reconsider its position.

However, this is something that we have to work on together. It's not man-to-man defence; this is zone defence. Everybody has to work together to get to where we need to go.

● (1630)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I'm trying to complete round two. Next is Mr. Savard-Tremblay.

You have two and a half minutes, please.

[*Translation*]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Thank you.

The United States always justifies tariffs on the grounds of national security, which seems to be a difficult pretext to support. In fact, every time there are lawsuits, the United States loses.

What are your observations when it comes to that circumvention of international trade?

Could there be a review to find a way to better regulate those concepts and prevent such a situation from continuing for more than 40 years?

[*English*]

**Eric Johnson:** That's a very difficult question to answer. The reason this has been going on for so long is that the U.S. has not appointed their representatives to the boards of review. They continue to drag out the process under dispute resolution, which is why we have the recommendation to put time-bound criteria within that dispute resolution to make sure that we can't continue to drag this out. That's one.

Two, in terms of why they need us, they can satisfy about 70% of their lumber demand themselves. Over the course of the last number of years and even at the height of COVID, when lumber prices were through the roof, they were able to increase their market share by 1%. Canada was at about 30%, and now we're at about 24%. That other 5% has gone to Europe. Europe right now has a 15% tariff on their lumber, and we're at 45%.

From my perspective, if we're looking at North American security and we're looking at being able to service ourselves, that, to me, is the outlier. If the U.S. still can't satisfy their own demand, why push it to another continent?

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We'll move on to Jason Groleau.

[*Translation*]

**Jason Groleau (Beauce, CPC):** Good afternoon, Madam Chair.

Good afternoon to our guests.

Mr. Johnson, you're the president of the Forest Products Association of Canada. I come from a rural area, and wood is important for us back home. You said that 400,000 jobs were directly or indirectly related to this sector, and that it was one of the four largest exporters. Where I come from, in Chaudière-Appalaches, the sector represents \$780 million in annual wages and 8,000 direct jobs, so it's very important.

Earlier, you said that \$10 billion was held by the U.S. Treasury. Who owns that money?

[*English*]

**Eric Johnson:** At the moment, it's on deposit, and it belongs to Canadians. It's there to secure against legal challenges in the U.S., but it's Canada's money.

[*Translation*]

**Jason Groleau:** Do you think the government should intervene, with everything that's going on right now, to recover that money and redistribute it among your members?

[*English*]

**Eric Johnson:** I think a negotiated settlement would solve that issue.

[*Translation*]

**Jason Groleau:** Thank you.

Nearly \$1.3 billion was announced for people in your sector. Do you think that could be perceived as an additional subsidy and that U.S. duties could increase even more?

[*English*]

**Eric Johnson:** No. The way that is structured is that \$700 million of that is loan guarantees. The agreement is between the business and the bank, and then the Government of Canada steps in to back that with the security being that future royalties from the cash deposits would come back in a negotiated settlement.

The other \$500 million through NRCan has been for existing programs for quite some time and are open to more than just the lumber companies.

• (1635)

[*Translation*]

**Jason Groleau:** Do you think it's normal for Europeans to be able to take wood from Germany, for example, ship it across the Atlantic and get a better price than we Canadians do?

Are you afraid of opening that market and losing it in the long term?

[*English*]

**Eric Johnson:** I think we have to do everything we can to try to offset the risk we currently face from the U.S. Market diversification, from our perspective, is one of those elements. Domestic construction is another.

Market access for us is going to take more than just finding customers. It has to do with being able to compete at a global scale. It costs us quite a bit to take our lumber from the middle of the country and get it to our ports. We need to find efficiencies there in order to be able to do that. I think any piece of lumber we can sell to a global market overseas and protect ourselves from tariffs, and make that an economic model for companies domestically, is a good thing.

We're not going to be able to solve it all through that. We're going to need a negotiated settlement.

[*Translation*]

**Jason Groleau:** Fibre is taken from logs that usually come from private lands in Quebec, and it's brought by the owners to the processor. Exports are basically at a standstill right now. In my riding, we used to export 50% to the United States, and that percentage is now down to 5%. Another 20% goes to American pulp mills.

Are you concerned that people will no longer cut wood on their private properties? Are you worried about losing that material?

[*English*]

**Eric Johnson:** I represent organizations that function and operate on public land. I don't have a view into private operators at this time. I apologize.

[*Translation*]

**Jason Groleau:** Do you think an intervention like adding money, for example, could exacerbate our trade disputes with the United States?

What solutions do you propose to solve this problem in the long term?

[*English*]

**Eric Johnson:** We've done everything to make sure that we operate in a way that would satisfy WTO trade regulations. We have consistently won those challenges each and every time they were brought forth. At this stage, I don't think there's anything really that the U.S. softwood lumber coalition can do or say that would prove one way or another that we are doing as they claim.

Ninety-four per cent of our operations are on public land—Canadians' land. We operate that way. We build roads. We build access. We replant. We pay for all of that as companies. The U.S. softwood lumber producers don't do any of it.

There are arguments on either side of this that need to be respected.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Lavoie, go ahead, please, for five minutes.

[*Translation*]

**Steeve Lavoie (Beauport—Limoilou, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for being here today.

My questions are for Ms. Yedlin and Mr. Griffiths.

I'm on familiar ground with you. I'm a former president of the Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Québec, so I'm very familiar with all the work you do for the economic development of businesses in your cities.

You talked about certainty; I talked about that for four years when I was president of the chamber of commerce. You talked about predictability. My question is for all the witnesses, given that in order to invest, businesses need to know if they will get a return on their investment.

Mr. Griffiths, you talked to the Americans and the American chambers of commerce. Given the integration of our markets, they want the same thing as we do, which is normal.

That said, there's a big “but”. There's a president south of the border who sees things differently. We may have to live with this new situation of unpredictability for a long time. However, life goes on, and our businesses have to learn to live with this new normal. Unpredictability has become the new normal. In this new context, we know that predictability won't come back overnight.

How do you see the future of our businesses? How should they get by in terms of their investments?

How can the government support them in this new reality?

Ms. Yedlin can answer first.

● (1640)

[*English*]

**Deborah Yedlin:** There is a very important way to look at this. I call it the “and” conversation. We need to make sure that we have the regulatory framework and the certainty to support our domestic industries, so that there is legislation in place and we know exactly what we're working with from a timing perspective. If there is no certainty and it is a very uncertain time, and if there is something we can do more effectively within the country to encourage investment and to encourage the formation and attraction of capital to develop whatever, whether it's a business that's manufacturing or a resource-based company.... Without certainty, nobody risks any capital.

I also think part of that is to focus on making sure that we have... What the government can do and what we need to focus on is infrastructure, making sure that we have transportation infrastructure to get our goods to market. I know that I have spoken with some major companies and they've said to me that if we don't deal with the infrastructure piece—whether it is rail, whether it is ports—it's hard for them to justify making investments in Canada.

Let's figure out how we can make sure that we have the right conditions to attract companies from other parts of the world to come here, help us develop our resources and start to grow our manufacturing capabilities.

I just want to remind everybody that we're about 3% of the world's global capital markets, so we depend on foreign investment and foreign investors to help develop our economy over the years. There has been a chill because there has been such a lack of certainty in terms of our regulatory system. Let's focus on that and let's focus on making sure we have the infrastructure, as well as the labour certainty, to be a reliable trading partner for whoever wants to come to be part of our Canadian economy.

**Doug Griffiths:** Thank you.

I would approach this with some kind of 20-year vision about where Canada is going to be 20 years from now. That's because if we do this right, 20 years from now I think Canada would be a better place to invest than the United States, even if you're looking to access the entire North American market. However, in order to do that we have to make sure our regulatory and environment processes are streamlined and, as Deb said, the infrastructure is in place. Otherwise, even if Canada is a decent place to invest, if we don't deal with the interprovincial trade barriers, then you're still going to have internal barriers, even with the infrastructure built. We need to deal with that.

You continue to work on interprovincial trade now, which I think is a solution for the short term, two to four years, but then in the immediacy I think this government is going to have to look at what sort of tax structure, what sort of policy structure and what sort of support structures need to be in place to ensure that our innovation economy continues to evolve and that our resource economy continues to survive, because we're going to need that to achieve those final objectives 20 years from now. Subsidies, tax restructuring, investments in infrastructure and the free trade within Canada are some core things we need over the next 10 years to make sure that 20-year vision comes true.

There isn't going to be one solution because the biggest challenge we have right now is that we're trying to find rational solutions to an irrational situation, and there is no rational solution when every five minutes a new policy comes out of the south. We have to approach this as though we're dealing with chaos, because we are, while still trying to integrate a long-term strategy that ensures security for us and access to all of North America and the world 20 years from now.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Thank you so much to our witnesses. To all three of you, you've given us some really valuable information today.

We will suspend for just one minute because we are already behind, since we started 10 minutes late.

• (1640) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

• (1645)

**The Chair:** I call the meeting back to order.

Would everybody please take their places? Our witnesses are ready to go.

Our witnesses for this panel include the Canadian Institute of Plumbing and Heating. By video conference we have Satinder Chera, chief executive officer. From Electric Mobility Canada, we have Daniel Breton, president and chief executive officer. From Seeds Canada is Lauren Comin, director of policy.

Welcome to you all.

Mr. Chera, you have up to five minutes. The floor is yours. Please commence.

**Satinder Chera (Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Institute of Plumbing and Heating):** Good afternoon.

Thank you to the chair and members of the committee for the invitation to appear in respect of the forthcoming CUSMA review.

My name is Satinder Chera. I'm the CEO of the Canadian Institute of Plumbing and Heating.

Founded in 1933, the CIPH is a national not-for-profit trade association representing over 250 companies. These businesses employ thousands of Canadians to help provide a safe, healthy and sustainable quality of life for our citizens. Our members manufacture and distribute plumbing and heating products across Canada, ensuring access to reliable systems for homes and businesses alike. These products are both in plain sight and behind the foundations of every built environment.

As part of a forthcoming report, CIPH has quantified the economic footprint of Canada's plumbing and heating industry as contributing \$21.5 billion to the country's GDP, directly employing over 75,000 Canadians, paying out nearly \$14 billion in wages and benefits and contributing nearly \$14 billion in tax revenue to all levels of government. Decades of stable trade between Canada, the United States and Mexico have allowed our industry to serve Canadian homes and businesses. In recent years, however, supply chain volatility and, more recently, tariff uncertainty have contributed to the erosion of business confidence in our industry.

While the initial shock of tariffs between Canada and the U.S. has subsided—somewhat—the business outlook for many of our members is far from certain. Higher costs have given way to a perpetual state of uncertainty, leaving many of our members to park their vote on future expectations for their businesses.

For CIPH members, these impacts are not theoretical. Plumbing and heating systems are the backbone of safe, livable communities. They heat our homes, deliver clean water and keep hospitals, schools and workplaces functioning. Canada's construction and building-products sector is deeply integrated with that of their U.S. counterparts. Many of our members operate on both sides of the border. Every day, products and components cross seamlessly between manufacturers, distributors and job sites. This vital integration is exactly what CUSMA envisioned.

When tariffs are placed on such products as plumbing fixtures, water heaters and raw materials, the consequences are amplified throughout the entire construction supply chain. These costs can rarely be fully absorbed by manufacturers and distributors. In fact, our member surveys continue to warn of higher product and input costs during this period of uncertainty. At a time when governments have committed to accelerating the pace of homes being built, even small increases can translate into higher housing prices, delayed projects and fewer affordable housing units. As one CIPH member has observed, consumers are very concerned and are more likely than not waiting for positive news before they start to make large investments, such as buying a new home.

Recent steps by the federal government to alleviate some of the reciprocal measures that were placed on products in our industry is a step in the right direction. We thank them for listening to our concerns and providing some measure of relief. At the same time, ensuring open borders to both the incoming and outgoing trade of products and services must factor into discussions around the future of CUSMA. As an industry, we stand ready to do our part in supporting the government's efforts, both here and south of the border.

CIPH's message is simple: Maintain open, predictable and tariff-free trade in essential building products. Plumbing and heating products are not a luxury. They are essential to not only building more affordable homes but also supporting the growth of Canada's plumbing and heating industry. These products should be protected from future unilateral trade action.

The CUSMA review also offers an important opportunity to further strengthen regulatory co-operation between the trading partners. Divergent product standards can add to supply chain challenges, resulting in higher costs and impeding innovation. A modernized CUSMA should reinforce stability, alignment and collaboration between North America's integrated construction ecosystem, just as governments in Canada have prioritized the elimination of interprovincial trade barriers.

CIPH recommends prioritizing the alignment of standards in such key areas as energy efficiency. Harmonized standards would streamline cross-border trade, reduce compliance costs and enable manufacturers to produce products more efficiently.

We are proud of the work that governments in Canada have undertaken in recent years to ensure the speedy adoption of harmonized national model codes. We need to take it one step further by aligning these efforts with our cross-border trade agreements.

In closing, Canada's plumbing and heating industry depends on free and fair trade across North America. The next phase of the CUSMA agreement should strengthen the integrated supply chain that keeps our homes warm, clean water flowing and our sector productive. CIPH and our member companies stand ready to support Parliament and the Government of Canada in achieving that goal.

Thank you very much.

• (1650)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Breton, go ahead, please. You have up to five minutes.

[*Translation*]

**Daniel Breton (President and Chief Executive Officer, Electric Mobility Canada):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

My name is Daniel Breton. I'm the CEO of Electric Mobility Canada, or EMC.

EMC is Canada's association for the transport electrification industry. It has 190 members, including car, truck and bus manufacturers; labour unions and research centres.

According to an EY report published in 2025, our industry already employs 130,000 people, and it's expected to employ between 360,000 and 600,000 within 10 years.

[*English*]

To ensure that CUSMA continues to support the growth and competitiveness of Canada's EV industry sector, EMC recommends the following actions to be considered during the 2026 joint review.

First, protect the zero-tariff classification of electrical energy. The provision supports the development of clean energy systems and the electrification of transportation. Its preservation is essential to maintaining cost-effective access to renewable electricity across the board.

Second, preserve and strengthen regional content rules that incentivize North American manufacturing of EVs, batteries, charging infrastructure and critical minerals. These rules are essential to building resilient supply chains and supporting the Canadian economy.

Third, establish a trilateral framework for battery recycling and black mass refining. Coordinated investment and standard setting across Canada, the U.S. and Mexico would help retain strategic materials within North America and reduce reliance on overseas processing.

Fourth, avoid regulatory harmonization that could lower Canadian standards. Canada must retain the flexibility to set ambitious zero-emission vehicle and environmental policies, particularly in light of divergent approaches among CUSMA partners such as the U.S. but also Mexico.

Fifth, include EV infrastructure and grid modernization in future co-operation chapters. They are foundational elements of the transition to e-mobility and require coordinated planning and investment across borders.

Sixth, advance interoperability through charging equipment standards. To support transborder travel and trade in electric vehicles, CUSMA partners should work towards harmonized standards for EV charging infrastructure.

Seventh, promote alignment or mutual recognition of clean fuel credit systems. This would support investment in public and private charging infrastructure and help scale low-carbon transportation solutions.

Eighth, support trilateral workforce development initiatives. Joint training and certification programs would help ensure that the North American labour force is equipped to meet the demands of the EV transition.

Ninth, work towards a harmonized customs valuation across CUSMA jurisdictions. Differences in customs valuation methodologies create an unnecessary administrative burden and increase costs for businesses and consumers. CUSMA partners should align their valuation approach to reduce red tape, improve affordability and support the integrated North American auto industry.

• (1655)

[*Translation*]

A few days ago, the tariffs led to layoffs and relocations at Stellantis, General Motors and Paccar, among other companies.

We are therefore in favour of concluding a new free trade agreement between Canada, the United States and Mexico, but not at the cost of concessions made at the expense of any sector, be it agriculture, manufacturing, forestry or any other one.

Given that the current American president does not respect either the citizens or the governments of other countries, including Canada, and that his own word and his own signature are unreliable, what value can we place on potentially signing a new agreement?

We also have to think about what can be termed non-offshorable jobs.

[*English*]

These are jobs that cannot be moved south.

[*Translation*]

At the end of the day, we would rather have no agreement than a bad agreement where we sacrifice entire segments of our economy.

Thank you.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Ms. Comin, you have the floor.

**Lauren Comin (Director of Policy, Seeds Canada):** Good afternoon, Madam Chair and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear today.

My name is Lauren Comin, director of policy for Seeds Canada, the national industry association representing seed developers, growers, analysts, retailers and service providers across the country. I'm here to support your study on Canada and the forthcoming CUSMA review.

Seed is the foundation of Canada's \$150-billion agri-food industry. Our sector contributes \$6 billion annually to the economy, 63,000 jobs and over \$1 billion of exports annually.

Seed is a critical input for Canada's agricultural production. Without access to seed, farmers are unable to produce a crop. As we approach the next planting season, farmers need assurance that they will have access to high-quality, low-cost seed.

Free trade is critically important for the Canadian, U.S. and Mexican seed industries due to their deep integration, mutual reliance and the global competitiveness of North American agriculture. Over \$1 billion of seed moves between Canada and the United States each year. Our partners are more than trading partners; they are partners in production. Seed may cross the border several times prior to being sold to the final customer, and there are some crop types for which Canada is entirely reliant on international seed production to fuel our industries, such as the 548,000 metric tons of tomatoes that are produced in Canada annually.

The Canadian seed sector, represented by Seeds Canada, supports preserving the existing text within CUSMA and feels that a renegotiation of the entire agreement is unnecessary and potentially disruptive. Seeds Canada recommends the maintenance of tariff-free market access for planting seeds—or seeds for sowing—as well as a commitment to ongoing co-operation on policy and regulatory issues.

Tariffs on seeds discourage investment, ultimately impacting farmer access to new seed innovations and negatively impacting Canada's competitiveness and food security. The free trade relationship facilitated by CUSMA provides the consistency the industry needs to optimize innovation.

It is important to note how closely the success of the seed sector is linked to the grains and oilseeds markets. Canada's crop sector is export-focused. The demand for these crops in global markets drives domestic production, which in turn creates strong demand for high-quality seeds.

Seeds Canada has the following recommendations for the forthcoming review: maintain tariff-free access to planting seeds or seeds for sowing; and continue commitment to ongoing co-operation on policy and regulatory issues, including seizing every opportunity to establish legal certainty for the commercialization of plants developed using innovative technologies such as genome editing, and encouraging Mexico to meet its obligations to ratify or accede to UPOV 1991.

In parallel to the CUSMA review, Canada must improve our supporting trade infrastructure, policies and procedures. Inefficiencies due to delays in phytosanitary certification and lack of consistency in applying policy delays trade, harms reputations and relationships, and leads to unnecessary costs to the sector.

Canada must commit to improving procedures, such as the full adoption of electronic phytosanitary certificates, or ePhytos, in the place of paper-based documents, and improving service standards. It is essential that frontline staff receive clear messaging from policy-makers on procedures to allow for consistent border experiences and to prevent delays. Most importantly, it is time for our regulatory environments to enable our trade-reliant agri-food sector as opposed to policing it.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear today. I look forward to the discussion and to answering any questions the committee may have.

• (1700)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We now move on to questions and comments from the members.

Mr. Mantle, please go ahead for five minutes.

**Jacob Mantle (York—Durham, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses for appearing.

Mr. Chera, my first questions will be directed to you. Thank you for being here. We often analogize things as being “the plumbing” when they're helping things work and run. You are the plumbing and the heating for Canadians, so I thank you and your members for that.

I note in some of your submissions, and you alluded to it in your remarks, that many of your products were subject to retaliatory surtaxes imposed by the Government of Canada on goods that were of U.S. origin. For example, natural gas furnaces that people use to heat their homes, schools or hospitals were subject to a 25% retaliatory tariff.

The majority of supply is from the United States. I think your numbers were that about 90% of the supply of furnaces is from the United States. Is that correct?

**Satinder Chera:** That would be fair to say. The standard number used is probably north of 70%.

**Jacob Mantle:** When your members paid surtaxes on that, they passed that along to their consumers in Canada. Is that correct?

**Satinder Chera:** That certainly would have been the case, yes.

**Jacob Mantle:** Did that raise the cost of home heating in Canada for Canadian citizens and for schools, hospitals and the like?

**Satinder Chera:** I'm not sure I have an exact line of sight on those costs, but I will say that in the conversations we've had with our members—I made this comment in my remarks—rarely are manufacturers able to fully absorb those costs. Yes, some of those costs have been passed on. I don't have an exact breakdown of those costs, however.

**Jacob Mantle:** Fair enough. I wouldn't expect you to have exact costs, but I think the principle would be that if the equipment to heat your home is more expensive, then it's more expensive to heat your home. Is that fair?

**Satinder Chera:** It's fair to say that costs on some of these products have certainly gone up, yes.

**Jacob Mantle:** I understand that the government removed some of the retaliatory tariffs as of September 1, but tariffs on home heating equipment remain. Is that correct?

**Satinder Chera:** For most of those products, the tariffs have now come off. There is, however, some hot water tank equipment where tariffs still remain, yes.

**Jacob Mantle:** I guess my question to you as an industry is this. We repeatedly heard from the Prime Minister during the election that Canada's actions would have a minimum impact on Canadians and a maximum impact on the United States.

Why would the government maintain retaliatory tariffs on products that are not easily accessible or sourceable in Canada?

**Satinder Chera:** I think this is one of the arguments we made earlier in the year when we asked the government to rethink some of these reciprocal measures that are in place. I have no doubt that this is not an easy situation any of us are in. I talk to my members on a very regular basis. The uncertainty is alive and well. It's certainly impacting their businesses.

For us, working very closely with all members of Parliament—I'll simply say that a number of weeks ago we met with all parties around this table—our hope and our expectations going forward are that we will continue to have those lines of dialogue open so that we can continue to provide some of the feedback our members are providing to us when it comes to the impact that tariffs on both sides of the border are certainly having on their businesses.

• (1705)

**Jacob Mantle:** Ms. Comin, I have a few questions for you. I understand that the CFIA maintains a seed grading system and that only grain products or varieties produced from seeds that are registered can receive appropriate grading. Otherwise, the grain gets the lowest grade. Do I have that roughly correct?

**Lauren Comin:** That is correct. The Canadian Grain Commission is the one that has the grain grading system.

**Jacob Mantle:** Thanks.

I understand that the United States Trade Representative has specifically singled out this seed registration system as, to quote the USTR, “slow and cumbersome”. Would you agree with that assessment?

**Lauren Comin:** That can certainly be the case for some crop types.

**Jacob Mantle:** I guess in response to some of those concerns of a slow and cumbersome process, a modernization program was undertaken beginning in 2021. It remains unfinished and incomplete as of today. Is that correct?

**Lauren Comin:** That's correct.

**Jacob Mantle:** In your view, is nearly five years enough time to do a modernization program?

**Lauren Comin:** I think it depends on the scope of the program. Certainly, it was well overdue in terms of the seed regulations—

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Comin. I'm trying to be tight with our time.

Yasir, you have five minutes.

**Yasir Naqvi (Ottawa Centre, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I want to thank all the witnesses for being here today and for sharing their thoughts.

I have two lines of questioning. The first one is for all three of you.

We are living in unprecedented times, post-Second World War, in terms of the level of protectionism we're seeing, especially within the North American context but perhaps globally. As we look at this CUSMA review and as we look at maintaining our close economic relationship with the United States, what would be, from your sector's perspective, your one bit of advice to the Government of Canada, as we engage in this review, that would be beneficial to your sector and to workers here in Canada?

We'll start with Mr. Breton.

**Daniel Breton:** Thank you.

You know, there's this whole discussion about buy American and the Buy American Act. I think we should start talking about buy Canadian. Take ferries, for instance. I'm sure you heard about the ferries ordered by BC Ferries. There was an RFP and it was awarded to a Chinese company.

I mean, we can make ferries. We can make electric ferries in Canada, whether it's in B.C., Quebec or Nova Scotia. For example, Paccar makes electric trucks and diesel trucks in Quebec. We should have RFPs to support those trucks being bought, and any cars or any product we can, because they are not respecting the rules south of the border.

To me, all bets are off. I think we have to protect Canadian jobs and Canadian workers. To me, we really have to look into that very seriously.

**Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you.

Go ahead, Ms. Comin.

**Lauren Comin:** The advice I would give is to make sure that our regulatory systems here in Canada are as efficient as possible and eliminate as much regulatory burden from our sector as possible so as to maximize investment in Canadian industry and ensure that our products are competitive on an international basis.

**Yasir Naqvi:** Mr. Chera.

**Satinder Chera:** Mr. Naqvi, I would simply say three things.

First, I think certainly the importance of dialogue between the Government of Canada, all members of Parliament and industries like the ones around this table is absolutely critical. With that ongoing dialogue, we can provide real, frontline intel to you and your colleagues on the impact that these tariffs are having.

We also have relationships south of the border. We work very closely with our sister organizations in the U.S. to ensure that the concerns we have are certainly being documented and being raised and that we have consistent messaging in terms of how important and integrated the North American construction supply chain is.

The other thing I would say is that, more immediately, the government can ensure that we continue to build on the successes of the national model codes that have been put into place. There are codes that can sometimes take years to get addressed—changes that industry is looking for. We're certainly working through all of those with NRC, but those are some of the things that the government can work to speed up, to at least help with getting products to market in the most efficient way possible.

• (1710)

**Yasir Naqvi:** I have a minute and 16 seconds left, so here's a rapid-fire question.

Canada and the U.S., of course, are important, but trade diversification and looking beyond Canada has to be an equal, if not a greater, priority. What advice do you have from your sector's perspective to the Government of Canada as to what needs to happen in order for us to open more markets in the world?

We'll go to Ms. Comin and Mr. Chera, and we'll end with Mr. Breton.

Thank you.

**Lauren Comin:** I would double down on what I mentioned previously. It's really important for regulation here in Canada to start supporting and enabling our industries to export to other jurisdictions, as opposed to focusing on policing.

**Satinder Chera:** I would add that certainly there are other markets, whether it's the European market or the Asian market, where the government has been looking to open up opportunities. From my members' perspective, yes, the North American market is absolutely critical, but there are other regions of the world, including Europe and Asia, that should be prioritized moving forward, for sure.

**Daniel Breton:** I would look at the American market as a whole, not as the United States of America. I'm talking about all of the countries from America. Americans think that America is them, but actually many countries are not "America", but they are in America. Do you know what I'm talking about?

I was in Mexico a couple of months ago. They want to do business with us more and more. Actually, when I was in Mexico, we were talking about trade. The second morning I was there, the U.S. administration announced a new 30% tariff on trade. Now they're more interested in working with us and finding ways to collaborate more.

I'm talking also to the Brazilian government. I think we have to look at our friends beyond the United States of America in America.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Breton.

We'll go on to Mr. Savard-Tremblay for five minutes.

[Translation]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'd like to thank all the witnesses for their presentations today.

Free trade or North American trade, at the very least, requires a review of CUSMA. That is the subject of today's meeting. However, electrification requires critical minerals. Mr. Breton, you are in fact one of the spokespeople for the electrification of transportation.

The issue of Chinese involvement in Canadian mining companies is part of the dynamic. In fact, China has made very significant investments in the critical minerals sector. However, there are also investments from the U.S. Department of Defense. Should that be part of the discussion?

**Daniel Breton:** That's a great question.

For those who don't know, for decades, the Department of National Defence and the Department of Natural Resources have been investing heavily in research and development in Canada to ensure the future of transportation electrification. They've also started to invest in mining projects.

I remember that a few years ago, the current Minister of Finance and National Revenue went to Washington to take part in discussions with the Biden administration on the Inflation Reduction Act. As partners, what are we going to do strategically to secure our competitiveness in the energy transition, meaning to secure access to critical minerals, whether for electric vehicles, renewable energy or defence? For strategic reasons, the Americans wanted to ensure that there would be no increase in Chinese investment in Canadian mining companies. At the time, Minister Champagne told Chinese investors that they needed to withdraw their investments from mining companies operating in Canada, which had to happen. Minister Champagne did that for the purposes of North American strategic security.

Today, we find ourselves in an odd situation where the U.S. government, meaning the Trump administration, is investing in Canadian mining projects while threatening to make Canada the 51st U.S. state. I think the Department of National Defence and the Department of Natural Resources should have a real discussion about how

to react to the Trump administration's potential investments in our mining projects.

The issue of critical minerals goes far beyond electric vehicles. This is a matter of national security, so I think an important discussion needs to take place.

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** First, how do you explain American involvement, given that the Americans are no longer interested in electric vehicles, while the previous administration was?

Second, you may be aware that, as part of our study, representatives of the automotive industry appeared before the committee. They seemed to identify electric vehicles as an irritant and a barrier to trade relations. I imagine that's not your position.

• (1715)

**Daniel Breton:** No, that's not my position. In fact, I find it kind of unbelievable, because automakers say they're in favour of free trade and don't want regulations for the sale of electric vehicles. From what I understand, for all sorts of good reasons, they also don't want competition, meaning they don't want Chinese or European vehicles to enter Canada.

I'm going to read you a quote from the CEO of Ford, Jim Farley.

[English]

It says, "Today's announcement imposing tariffs on imported medium and heavy[-duty] trucks and making auto parts affordable for U.S. production delivers on that promise".

[Translation]

Ford's CEO says he agrees that U.S. tariffs should be applied on American products, specifically on medium and heavy-duty vehicles. At the same time, we're being told by representatives of the same company north of the border that we shouldn't create competition and that they're against tariffs, which are causing job losses in Canada. The tariffs on medium and heavy-duty vehicles that came into effect two days ago resulted in the loss of 300 jobs at a Paccar plant in Canada.

Let me tell you something. Currently, in the United States, General Motors is using the fact that there are no longer any regulations or investments in the electrification of transportation as an excuse to justify layoffs, whereas north of the border, people are being laid off because there are regulations.

Let me tell you what I think in either language. Some car manufacturers say one thing and then the opposite depending on which side of the border they're on.

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** You're talking about job losses, but can you also tell me about offshoring? Some manufacturers said that the vehicle availability standard was the cause of layoffs and relocations to the United States.

**Daniel Breton:** No, it's not the zero-emission vehicle standard that's causing the layoffs; it's the tariffs and the divestment.

I'm getting old, so I've seen the same kind of tango, one step forward and one step back, for a quarter of a century. Republican administrations move back the energy transition while Democratic administrations move it forward. When a new president takes power, we move back. I've seen this since the presidency of George W. Bush, who moved back. Barack Obama moved forward. Donald Trump moved back. Joe Biden moved forward. Donald Trump moved back. The next president will probably move forward.

What is changing in terms of the electrification of transportation is that, a few years ago, there wasn't really any competition, whereas now, the Chinese are competing with us and taking market share.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Breton.

[Translation]

**Daniel Breton:** If we do nothing and simply align ourselves with the Trump administration, which is moving back on the energy transition, we'll end up in a situation where Chinese manufacturers will walk all over us.

That's a given.

[English]

**The Chair:** My apologies, but I have to cut you off.

We have Mr. Chambers for three minutes, please.

**Adam Chambers (Simcoe North, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Comin, I want to follow up on a few questions that my colleague discussed with you about the regulatory modernization review. My understanding is that your organization referred to that as a potential "missed opportunity" or maybe even "underwhelming". Is that an appropriate characterization?

**Lauren Comin:** Yes.

**Adam Chambers:** Do you want to expand a little on what you mean by "underwhelming"? That doesn't sound like a ringing endorsement.

**Lauren Comin:** No, it is certainly not.

As I mentioned in my previous comments, it was a long time coming for the sector to have this modernization opportunity. At the start of the process, over five years ago, we were promised a transformational change and a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, etc.

What we have seen from the process, through the policy document that was recently released and consulted on by the CFIA, is a few small improvements, or edits, really. There were some more significant improvements, such as moving to incorporation by reference, which is not a modernization in itself but certainly enables future modernization. There was a recognition that having an industry advisory committee can help to improve future modernization, and then there were some changes that either have no impact or actually have a negative impact on the sector's cost and speed to market.

**Adam Chambers:** If I can summarize, it took longer than you expected, and even the recommendations, or what has come of it, maybe, in your view, are not materially advantageous to what was possible.

**Lauren Comin:** That's correct.

**Adam Chambers:** Okay.

You don't have to outline them now, but if you had other specific recommendations—I'm sure you would have participated in the consultation—I would appreciate it, as I'm sure other members of the committee would, if you would send those to us as a committee, as we might be able to review those and potentially include any of them.

Would you like to highlight any of these recommendations here today?

• (1720)

**Lauren Comin:** I can send them in. There will be some relevant to the committee and others not, but I can definitely forward them in.

**Adam Chambers:** That's very helpful.

Do you think any part of that consultation will result in additional trade irritants for our American trading partners?

**Lauren Comin:** There were potentially some recommendations that could lead to irritants, one being the country-of-origin labelling of seed—that is something the seed sector did not support—but otherwise, they were mostly irritants for domestic seed production and use.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Next, I have Madame Lapointe for three minutes.

[Translation]

**Linda Lapointe:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for being with us today.

Mr. Breton, my riding is Rivière-des-Mille-Îles. It includes Deux-Montagnes, Saint-Eustache, Boisbriand and Rosemère. We're next door to the Paccar plant, but we also have the Nova Bus plant. Electric buses are being built in my riding.

You said earlier that we should impose "buy Canadian" rules inspired by those of the Americans. We know that Quebec is a leader in transportation electrification and clean energy. What measures could the federal government defend in CUSMA to protect electric vehicles and Quebec's battery supply chains that are being developed south of Trois-Rivières in Bécancour?

**Daniel Breton:** As I said before, many jobs are not offshorable, including energy-related ones. For generating electricity, we're not going to move the James Bay dam south of the border no matter what. The world needs electricity more and more. We already know that this is a positive factor for the energy transition and job creation in all regions of Canada. Charging infrastructure is also impossible to offshore. The critical minerals and mines are here. We can very easily develop this sector. I was pleased to see that the Canadian government has started signing agreements with other governments. I'm thinking, for example, of the critical minerals supply and partnership agreement with Germany.

Companies like Nova Bus and Paccar, for example, say they have to review their entire strategy. For those who don't know, Paccar was shipping 95% of its trucks to the United States up until just a few days ago. Now it says it is cutting production and plans to redirect it to the Canadian market. To do so, it needs the support of governments in putting out calls for tenders based on the "buy Canadian" principle. We can even ensure that the calls for tender are what we call clean procurements that will not be in violation of existing free trade agreements with other countries around the world.

Companies like Nova Bus and shipyards like Davie and those in British Columbia can be given an advantage. Companies like Paccar know that Quebec has the Écocamionnage program. There are programs like the incentives for zero-emission vehicles program, or iZEV, to promote the transition toward manufacturing Canadian electric trucks. All of these programs exist, and others could be created quite easily.

I remember Minister Champagne previously talking about putting out "buy Canadian" tenders. I think it's a discussion we haven't wanted to have for years, but circumstances have changed so much since last year that we need to encourage it. There are thousands of jobs at stake. I see American manufacturers coming to Canada and telling us that they don't want regulations, but that they are in favour of tariffs because they will promote jobs in the United States.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Breton.

[Translation]

**Daniel Breton:** This is a real debate that we need to have.

[English]

**The Chair:** I apologize for having to cut you off.

We'll go to Mr. Savard-Tremblay for one minute.

Do you have a one-minute question?

[Translation]

**Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Okay.

Earlier, Mr. Breton, you were cut off while you were explaining to us that the problem wasn't the zero-emission standard. That has been criticized. You talked about the fact that the Americans move forward and back. In Canada, however, we seem to be moving backward.

How do you explain that?

**Daniel Breton:** Actually, the consultation on the federal zero-emission standard ends tomorrow, which is budget day, so I'm going to have a big day tomorrow, I have to say.

In fact, we notice that when companies see that a government, regardless of which one it is and regardless of the country, is moving in a direction resolutely committed to investment and regulation, it creates market predictability for them. In other words, when it comes to investment, there is nothing worse than continually moving forward and backward when it comes to investment and regulation.

Let's take the example of Volkswagen. The company is going through a difficult time right now. They're wondering what to do about regulations. Volkswagen says it's going to invest billions of dollars in a supply chain and a battery plant in St. Thomas. Now Volkswagen is wondering what it is going to do with it. Right now it's energy storage, but it's a massive investment, and Volkswagen is surprisingly committed.

In the context of the Canada-U.S. trade war, the government granted a counter-tariff exemption to Ford, General Motors, Stellantis, Honda and Toyota.

Volkswagen, which is building a plant, did not get an exemption. That really needs to be looked at. We need to look beyond current jobs toward the jobs of the future.

• (1725)

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We'll move on to Mr. Mantle for two minutes. We'll go back to Mr. Fonseca for the remaining two minutes.

I know the committee wanted to end at 5:30, and I'm trying to accommodate everybody.

We'll go to Mr. Mantle for two minutes.

**Jacob Mantle:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to move two motions at the committee this afternoon, both with respect to the CUSMA public consultations. One was in 2024 and the other was in 2025.

Would the chair like me to read my motions for the committee?

**The Chair:** Yes, please.

**Jacob Mantle:** Okay.

The first motion is with respect to the 2024 CUSMA consultations. The motion reads as follows:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(1)(a), the committee order Global Affairs Canada to provide to the committee within ten business days a list identifying each person or entity that made a submission to the government of Canada during the public consultation held in respect of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement from August 17 to October 31, 2024, as set out in the Canada Gazette, Part I, Volume 158, Number 33; and that the committee order Global Affairs Canada to provide to the committee within ten business days any briefing memoranda or similar information provided to any Minister in respect of the public consultations; and that the committee order Global Affairs Canada to provide to the committee each submission received during the public consultation as each submission is translated into both official languages; and that, if Global Affairs Canada is unable to provide any submission because of the alleged confidentiality of its contents, it be ordered to provide a redacted version of that submission omitting only that information alleged to be confidential; and that, if, and only if, Global Affairs Canada is unable to provide a redacted version of any submission because of the alleged confidentiality of its contents, it be ordered to provide a summary, in both official languages, of that submission and such summary shall be in sufficient detail to permit a reasonable understanding of the substance of the information submitted; and that, in any case where Global Affairs Canada is unable to provide any part of a submission because of the alleged confidentiality of its content that it be ordered to provide its rationale for withholding that information from the committee, including the legal opinion, citing the provision(s) of relevant Canadian law, upon which it relies.

That is the first motion.

**The Chair:** I understand it was sent to everybody by email. Are there any questions or comments?

I'm not seeing any.

(Motion agreed to)

**The Chair:** Is the second one a duplication of the first one, except for the year change?

**Jacob Mantle:** The second is identical to the first motion, except with respect to the 2025 public consultation.

**The Chair:** Are there any questions or comments?

**Yasir Naqvi:** Read it in French.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh!

**Jacob Mantle:** Give me a little time. I'll come back with the French.

**The Chair:** Are all in favour of the motion?

(Motion agreed to [*See Minutes of Proceedings*])

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

**Jacob Mantle:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** We'll go to Mr. Fonseca for two minutes.

**Peter Fonseca:** Madam Chair, thank you very much. I'll just leave this with the witnesses.

We've heard a lot about harmonization, modernization, certification and standardization coming from.... We all agree with this.

You can send this in if you have this information. I'd like to know, from the witnesses, the economic impacts to the three countries within CUSMA. What does it mean to the three countries—Canada, the United States and Mexico—not to have the harmonization we are looking for?

It can be a few top-line types of numbers; that would help, if you have them. If you do not, we thank you very much.

Thank you for your testimony today.

I think they'll just send it in, Madam Chair, if they have it.

**The Chair:** In response to Mr. Fonseca, if you would like to forward to the clerk any of your comments, that would, again, help us as we move forward.

Thank you very much to our witnesses. Your valuable information is much appreciated.

Ms. Comin, you will forward to the clerk any additional information you have with regard to your portfolio.

Thank you very much. I move adjournment.







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