



July 7, 2026

The Honourable Scott Moe
Premier of Saskatchewan
Legislative Building
Regina, SK S4S 0B3

The Honourable Danielle Smith
Premier of Alberta
Legislative Building
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Re: The Time for Provincial Leadership on U.S. Trade Is Now

Dear Premiers Moe and Smith,

The Buffalo Group calls on you to undertake immediate and direct trade negotiations, at the Premier level, with the United States administration. After a lost decade of economic stagnation under Justin Trudeau, marked by anaemic per-capita growth (roughly 0.3% annually in real terms), collapsing productivity, and chronic underinvestment, Western Canada cannot afford to continue ceding control of its economic relationships to Ottawa.

We feel that should both of you engage in formal trade talks, together, that would send a powerful signal to Ottawa and Washington that our two provinces understand the importance of trade with the United States, and that Ottawa has failed in this regard.

Notwithstanding the long-standing and ongoing need to diversify international trade, the United States remains, by far, Canada's largest trading partner. Yet the federal government, including and perhaps especially under the current Prime Minister, has created a difficult and destructive relationship with the American administration, and is clearly prioritizing Eastern Canadian interests, particularly the auto sector in Ontario and aerospace and advanced manufacturing in Quebec.

Our far more valuable resource exports seem an afterthought, if they are being advocated for at all. Ottawa's defense of supply management, a glaring irritant in U.S. economic relations, stands out as clear evidence of blatant Eastern economic bias. Imagine protecting a few thousand Eastern dairy farmers when that policy jeopardizes U.S. trade that sustains hundreds of thousands of jobs in Alberta and Saskatchewan sectors.

Western exports to the U.S. dwarf Eastern contributions in both scale and strategic importance. Crude oil exports to the United States reached approximately \$126 billion, according to 2025 data. Add natural gas, refined products, potash from Saskatchewan (approximately \$4.2 billion annually to the U.S.), canola and other agricultural products including beef and livestock, and uranium from Saskatchewan.

These sectors are not only outsized drivers of the entire Canadian economy, they deliver energy security, critical minerals, and food security to our American neighbours. By comparison,

Eastern-focused vehicle and parts exports sit in the \$48 billion range and, unlike Western products, could migrate out of Canada easily.

Federal priorities became glaringly obvious in the hot-mic exchange at the recent G7 summit between Prime Minister Carney and President Trump, which focused narrowly on auto and EV issues rather than Western Canada's much more economically important sectors.

The recent federal-Alberta energy and pipeline MOU has done little to change this anti-Western economic bias — timelines are slow, and conditions are heavy. Alberta and Saskatchewan remain secondary priorities in Ottawa's eyes.

The frustration in the West is no longer abstract. Growing separatist movements and rising support for greater autonomy, most visibly in Alberta but echoed in Saskatchewan, are clear symptoms of deep alienation caused by years of federal policies that have stifled Western growth and ignored our economic realities. After a decade of weak performance, Western Canadians are rightly demanding results.

Immediate provincial leadership on trade is one of the most effective ways to deliver those results. Our two premiers negotiating together would signal that these concerns are not just the grumblings of a single province.

If the goal is to restore strong economic growth and strengthen provincial positions within Canada, then bypassing biased federal gatekeeping and pursuing direct trade negotiations with the United States is not optional. It is essential.

We urge you to move decisively — together. Alberta and Saskatchewan hold the resources the United States needs most. It is time that the leaders of our provinces lead these conversations directly on behalf of our economy and our people.

Don't let Ottawa hold the keys to our trade with the U.S. Take them back.

The Buffalo Project stands ready to support this effort in any way required.

Respectfully,

The Buffalo Project Working Group

Dallas Howe, Chair (Saskatchewan/Alberta)

James Baker (Alberta)

Don Bell (Alberta)

Matthew Campbell (Alberta)

Marshall Copithorne (Alberta)

Jim Evaskevich (Alberta)

Bruce Fiell (Alberta)

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Wayne Henuset (Alberta)

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