May 17, 2017

Dear Premier Christy Clark, Premier Rachel Notley, Premier Brian Pallister and Premier Brad Wall:

The rules governing trade with, and access to, Canada’s first and third largest trading partners have come under attack – threatening two decades of growth and prosperity in western Canada.

For the citizens and businesses of western Canada, it is crucial that their governments, individually and collectively, take the lead to assure that unique western interests are represented in determining the future   
rules for trade in North America.

One of the most effective ways to do this is to work directly with counterparts and colleagues in the western U.S. and one of the best venues to do this is at the annual Western Governors’ Association meeting.

Montana Gov. Steve Bullock, who hosts this year’s meeting, has made relations with Canada and trans-boundary issues a special focus of the meeting, an extraordinary overture that we could not afford to pass on in the best   
of times.

And these clearly are not the best of times.

In the past, Western Premiers played a major role as partners in the negotiations leading up to the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement and were also closely involved in the NAFTA negotiations which followed. The regular meetings between Western Premiers and Western Governors that followed greatly improved co-operation in trade, energy strategies, environmental protection, emergency management and the types of personal, lasting relationship-building that facilitated co-operation.

The continuation and renewal of these relationships are crucial to ensure that the upcoming discussions of   
NAFTA are as well-informed and productive as possible.

We therefore write to publicly encourage and support the New West Partnership premiers of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, to attend the 2017 Annual Meeting of the Western Governors’ Association in Montana from June 26-28, to work together to advance western Canada’s interests directly with their counterparts in the U.S. and to build upon nearly 30 nearly years of dialogue and discussion to confront the new challenges that we face.

We stand ready to support and help in any way that may be required.

Canada West Foundation, Pacific NorthWest Economic Region, U.S.-Canada S.A.G.E.   
Alberta Chamber of Commerce, American Chamber of Commerce in Canada - Western Chapter,   
Business Council of British Columbia., Business Council of Manitoba, British Columbia Chamber of Commerce,   
Manitoba Chamber of Commerce, Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, Vancouver Board of Trade