

Ottawa Journal by David Tilson MP ? Standing up for Canadian jobs



The NAFTA talks continue to heat up, as we approach the Montreal negotiations later this month and the ongoing threat from the Trump administration to withdraw from the pact if improvements for the U.S. can't be reached.

Canadians are increasingly concerned about our country's future, more specifically about Canadian jobs, if such a scenario occurred. It is an unthinkable scenario, but one that can't be ignored. We must, therefore, do everything possible to work together to ensure NAFTA remains in place.

The importance of NAFTA to our country and Canadian jobs cannot be understated. Canada and the U.S. are the world's largest trading partners. Since NAFTA came into effect, it has created hundreds of thousands of well-paying jobs in Canada, including 550,000 in the auto sector, 400,000 in the forestry sector and 211,000 in the aerospace sector. It is also important to remember that more than \$2 billion in trade crosses the Canada-U.S. border every day and that approximately nine million U.S. jobs depend on trade and investment with Canada. We're also the top trading partner for more than 30 of the 50 U.S. states. Furthermore, U.S. exports to Canada increased by 179 per cent since 1993 when NAFTA came into force. These are just a few compelling reasons why NAFTA is an essential agreement that benefits its member countries and why we need to work together to save it, not scrap it. Our leader of the Official Opposition Andrew Scheer, together with Conservative shadow ministers, will be travelling to Washington this week to stand up for Canadian jobs and industries. We are working with the government of Canada and doing our part to present a united Canadian front against U.S. protectionist policies. We want the best deal for Canadian families, workers and businesses. We also understand why Canadians are concerned with the NAFTA renegotiations, since one in five Canadian jobs are created as a result of free trade agreements. Thus, it's critical for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to continue to protect these well-paying, high-quality jobs.

Canadians can count on the Conservative Official Opposition to stand up for Canadian jobs, as we are the party of free trade. We have negotiated the vast majority of Canada's current free trade agreements, including NAFTA. Scheer and his team will make a significant contribution to the meetings taking place with stakeholders to advocate for the merits of the agreement.