
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development

TRADE ACCORD WILL BENEFIT ECONOMY

VICTORIA – An unprecedented British Columbia-Alberta trade agreement that has been the catalyst to full labour mobility nationally and that will help make Canada a more desirable place for global investment is about to come into full force, said Small Business, Technology, and Economic Development Minister Ida Chong today.

“Reducing internal trade barriers is critical to our economy,” said Chong. “The Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA) creates tremendous opportunities for growth and prosperity for citizens of both our provinces.”

Since introducing the TILMA in 2006, restrictive interprovincial trade barriers have been eradicated and more than 100 regulated occupations now have full labour mobility between Canada’s two westernmost provinces.

“The TILMA shows that when governments work together and apply common sense, great things can happen,” said Ron Stevens, Alberta Deputy Premier and Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations. “The agreement has reduced government red tape, making life easier for workers and small businesses in Alberta and in doing so has helped transform labour mobility and internal trade within Canada.”

Under the TILMA, teachers or welders certified in one province are able to move to the other without recertification or examination. Also, a long-distance trucker driving the Trans-Canada between Vancouver and Calgary will not face a host of differing and duplicative regulations on each side of the B.C.-Alberta border. The two provinces are launching a streamlined company and business registration system to eliminate the requirement and fees for registering in both provinces and for duplicate annual report filings.

TILMA has also spurred discussions between other provinces to further eliminate interprovincial barriers that hamper economic growth and activity. Just recently, British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan agreed to begin discussions to create a new western economic partnership.

Additionally, TILMA has taken several steps to open up healthy competition that benefit businesses, taxpayers and consumers in both provinces. TILMA has:

- Lowered provincial government procurement thresholds to \$10,000 for goods and \$75,000 for services. The previous thresholds were \$25,000 for goods and \$100,000 for services. Construction thresholds remain at \$100,000.
- Lowered public-sector procurement thresholds for municipalities, academic institutions, school boards and hospitals (MASH) to \$75,000 for goods and services, and \$200,000 for construction projects. The previous thresholds were \$100,000 for goods and services and \$250,000 for construction projects.

Both provinces supported an open and transparent process and held extensive consultations with municipalities, academic institutions, school boards and hospitals (MASH sector) to determine how the agreement would apply. British Columbia and Alberta also worked closely with the professional regulatory bodies responsible for reconciling qualification requirements between the provinces.

The TILMA is designed to continue to benefit the people of British Columbia and Alberta as the two governments have committed to ensure that any legislation, regulations or policies proposed in the future will not operate to impede the movement of goods, persons and investment between the two provinces.

For more information, visit www.tilma.ca. Workers and businesses will find information on the agreement, names of people to contact about full labour mobility, and how to access procurement opportunities, as well as detailed questions and answers about the agreement.

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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