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May 3, 2021

Alaska State Senate Labor and Commerce Committee
The Honorable Mia Costello, Chair
The Honorable Joshua Revak, Vice Chair
The Honorable Peter Micciche, Member, Senate President
The Honorable Gary Stevens, Member
The Honorable Elvi Gray-Jackson, Member
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Esteemed Committee Members,

I write to you in support of Senate Joint Resolution 15: Recognizing and honoring the relationship between Canada and the state; and recognizing the importance of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

The United States and Canada enjoy one of the closest relationships between any two countries in the world. We are friends; we are allies; we are partners. Our enduring partnership – now over 150 years old – is built on common geography, history, culture, and values.

Canada and the U.S. also share one of the longest borders in the world – more than 5,500 miles – and more than 1,500 of these miles are shared with Alaska, the longest border with Canada of any state. Under usual circumstances, 400,000 people and almost US\$2 billion of goods and services cross the Canada-U.S. border every day.

Of course, Canada and the great state of Alaska share many commonalities, especially when compared with the lower 48 and Hawaii. We are blessed with extraordinary natural environments, valuable natural resources, and Indigenous knowledge that stretches back millennia.

We also share myriad transportation linkages, especially by land and sea, and an important trade relationship. Canada and Alaska traded almost \$1.4 billion in goods and services in 2020, supporting thousands of jobs on both sides of the border. There are over 50 Canadian-owned companies operating in the state, and these companies account for nearly 4,500 Alaskan jobs and contribute to \$265 million in salaries. These Canadian companies and their employers are major contributors to Alaska's economy. In addition to hundreds of millions of dollars worth of two way trade in metals, minerals and energy, Canada also imported close to \$46 million in seafood in 2019.

Canada

And, as you know, last year, the U.S. Congress passed the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). This landmark agreement reaffirms that North America will remain the most competitive region in the world: we don't just sell things to each other; we make things together.

Canada and Alaska are also key partners in the Arctic region and cooperation is longstanding on a wide range of issues. Climate change, technological advances, globalization, and other factors are dramatically transforming the northern quarter of our planet, and the Arctic will increasingly become a place of cultural, environmental, economic, and strategic importance. We continue to work together to expand our shared security in an increasingly uncertain world.

One shining example of our shared security partnership is located in Alaska at Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson. The Alaskan NORAD Region, led by an American Commander and Canadian Deputy Commander, contributes to the safety and security of all of North America.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has said that "America has no better friend, ally or partner than Canada." I wholeheartedly agree with him when he says, "we have the longest, most peaceful and mutually beneficial relationship of any two countries in the history of the world" and I urge you to support this resolution of friendship between Canada and Alaska.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brandon Lee", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brandon Lee, Consul General of Canada to Seattle