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TRADE BARRIERS IN
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MOVING FORWARD**

Jared Carlberg

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SUMMARY

Canada is well known as an export-based economy, particularly with respect to its agricultural and agri-food industries. Since the signing of the Canada-U.S. Trade Agreement (CUSTA) in 1989, the federal government has negotiated trade agreements with more than 40 international partners, providing Canadian firms with access to a multitude of foreign markets while also giving consumers at home a greater set of choices in the market for a great number of goods and services. Progress on more liberalized internal trade within the federation has not, however, kept pace with accomplishments on the international trade front. Despite the implementation of the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) in 1995 and the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) in 2017 (along with several smaller but significant interprovincial agreements), a number of significant barriers remain to internal trade in goods and services in Canada. The focus of this paper is upon barriers that prevent the movement of goods and services among provinces, referred to as interprovincial trade barriers.

There are a number of different types of these barriers; one such type is tariffs (which function similar to a sales tax) upon goods and services themselves. While tariffs are a major topic of study in international trade, they do not form a focus of this paper, which will instead focus on non-tariff barriers or NTBs. One such category of barriers to internal trade includes natural barriers such as lakes, rivers, mountain ranges and the simple distance between potential trading partners. A second type is called prohibitive barriers, which make illegal the movement of certain types of goods or services among provinces; perhaps the most well-known of these pertains to the prohibition of the movement of alcohol or tobacco between provinces. Technical and regulatory/administrative barriers also exist, and pertain to provincial differences in requirements within specific sectors, licensing requirements, etc. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) has noted that differences in trucking regulations as well as inconsistent regulation of provincially and federally inspected meat-processing facilities are of particular concern in the agricultural and agri-food industries (CFA 2021).

These barriers are costly to the Canadian economy, limiting its growth, output, efficiency and productivity. Estimates by Alvarez et al. (2019) suggest that Canadian GDP would increase by between one and four per cent if trade in goods alone were completely liberalized. This is approximately \$92 billion per year, an amount that, if realized, could lead to significant job creation, increased streams of taxation revenue for government, enhanced economic growth and improved

productivity. Economists have long cited the efficient and welfare-maximizing outcomes associated with unfettered markets, and removal of interprovincial trade barriers would provide significant gains for the Canadian economy.

Several important drivers have led to the current situation where barriers to interprovincial trade constrict the freer flow of goods and services in Canada. One of them is federalism itself, where the duty of provincial governments is to act in the best interest of constituents, even if it means overall gains to Canada as a whole are not being realized. Related to this is a second driver, which is the balancing act that courts must strike in Canada when interpreting both federal and provincial legislation in areas where both levels of government can be argued to have jurisdiction. A third driver is the potential for stakeholders to act to prevent liberalization of trade if it is in their best interest to do so. Regulators and gatekeepers, industry associations and even governments can have vested financial or personal interest in the status quo, and be hesitant to change it even if they recognize that change would have the potential to provide greater economic benefits to others. A final driver that has led to the current system is the sheer amount of time, effort and expertise that would be required to update the current system.

There are at least three plausible options for reducing interprovincial barriers to trade in Canada. The first would be to encourage courts to interpret relevant legislation in a way that would aid the freer flow of products and services internally. For example, section 121 of the *Constitution Act* seems to clearly require the free movement of goods among provinces, but the Supreme Court of Canada has, out of respect for provinces' rights, deferred to the notion of federalism and consistently interpreted legislation in a way that permits provinces to put limits on trade. Should the Court interpret 121 in a more constructionist way, interprovincial trade would increase. A second option is for provinces to independently negotiate more open markets in Canada. The New West Partnership Trade Agreement (NWPTA) among the four Western provinces has been successful, as have other regional agreements, at opening markets and generating economic benefits. A third option is to use the CFTA's mechanisms and resources at the federal and provincial levels to remove barriers on an industry-by-industry basis. Given the sheer number of firms and industries, it is more cumbersome to negotiate large-scale, national or multi-provincial agreements than smaller scale, industry-specific ones.

There are costs and benefits associated with each of these options. Requiring courts to revise how they interpret law is beyond the power of the federal and provincial governments. Striking new trade partnerships is a time-consuming process, with no assurance of success. Negotiating improvements in specific sub-sectors and industries is achievable, but provides only incremental gains. From a benefits perspective, there is much to be gained: the estimated economic benefits from the freer flow of goods and services are considerable, although it is likely that those with a vested interest will see some of their current benefits transferred to others as a result of removing trade barriers. Overall, it seems obvious that previous work to liberalize trade has been fruitful, and a combination of the options proposed is likely to be worth the effort.

INTRODUCTION

Its system of federalism is a fundamental defining characteristic of Canada, but also sometimes limits our country's ability to maximize economic benefits and distribute them evenly and effectively among all Canadians. This is particularly true with respect to provinces' ability to place restrictions upon the movement of goods and services among them. Since the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (CUSTA) was signed in 1989, pacts have been struck with more than 40 international trading partners. Unfortunately, progress on internal trade has not kept pace, with significant barriers remaining and considerable lost economic benefits and opportunities as a result.

The unrealized potential benefits certain to arise as a result of more liberalized internal Canadian trade have long been recognized and considerable effort has gone into attempts to make progress on this front. At a national level, the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT), negotiated among first ministers and signed in 1995, was a significant step forward in terms of a national framework for internal trade, and made progress in a number of key areas. In 2017, the new Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) came into effect, updating and replacing the AIT. The new internal trade pact adopted a so-called "negative list approach," meaning that exclusions from the agreement needed to be identified and itemized, a considerable improvement over the "positive list" approach that was a characteristic of the AIT.

Despite the progress that has been made as the result of stakeholders' extensive efforts to remove barriers to the free movement of goods and services in Canada and implementation of the AIT and subsequent CFTA, significant and costly barriers to interprovincial trade remain. Alvarez et al. (2019) identify four categories of domestic non-tariff barriers to trade. An obvious type, but not one that is central to this paper, are natural barriers such as geography, distance or political boundaries. A second type is prohibitive barriers (i.e., those that prohibit the movement of specific types of goods between provinces); one well-known example is barriers on the movement of alcoholic beverages between provinces, often due to differences in taxation rates on such products. The third and fourth categories of barriers are technical and regulatory/administrative ones, which relate to differences in sector-specific requirements and differences in permits, licensing, etc., respectively. The authors further observe that barriers to internal trade hinder the mobility of labour, limit the set of choices available to consumers, lead to fragmented markets, stifle competition and limit the effective scale of production, which together limit productivity growth.

These barriers to trade impose significant costs upon the Canadian economy, with implications for efficiency, output, growth and competitiveness. Alvarez et al. (2019) estimate that if internal trade in goods¹ were completely liberalized, per-capita GDP (gross domestic product, a common measure of the total value of goods and

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Note that this estimate does not include significant additional costs pertaining to labour mobility.

services produced in an economy over a given period of time) in Canada would increase by four per cent, or around \$92 billion, given Canada's annual GDP of around \$2.3 trillion as of the fourth quarter of 2020 (Statistics Canada 2021). For context, this was approximately the same amount as the combined total of elderly benefits, employment insurance benefits and the Canada Child Benefit in Canada's 2018/2019 federal budget (Government of Canada 2019).

DRIVERS TO INTERPROVINCIAL BARRIERS TO TRADE

A number of important drivers have led to the current system of significant restrictions on interprovincial trade within Canada. As noted early in this paper, federalism and the potential it creates for protectionist behaviour by provinces could perhaps be identified as one of the most important. Within our federal system, both senior levels of government (i.e., federal and provincial) have some areas of sole responsibility, while they share responsibility for some significant matters. This often blurs the lines between policies that are best for all Canadians (a federal government goal) and policies that are best for the residents of a particular province (in many ways, the goal of provincial governments). While policies relating to international trade are the federal government's responsibility, provincial governments have considerable responsibility for interprovincial trade and also have the power to implement measures that create barriers to trade. Provincial leaders are expected to choose courses of action designed to maximize their citizens' welfare, just as federal leaders would do. Accordingly, if they choose to act in a protectionist way that prevents competing firms from other provinces from doing business, not only is the distribution of economic benefits constrained, but also overall economic welfare is likely not maximized (Ortiz Valverde and Latorre 2020).

A second driver of interprovincial barriers to trade that is directly related to federalism is the hesitance of Canadian courts (and perhaps the federal government itself) to interpret relevant sections of the *Constitution Act* in a way that would recognize its implicit support of the free flow of goods among provinces. Various sections of the *Constitution Act* (e.g., s91(2); s121) appear to grant the federal government authority over matters of trade and commerce, and specifically advocate for unfettered trade among provinces while at the same time acknowledging provincial jurisdiction over several important related matters. There has been considerable contention on these matters, however, including varying legal interpretations of the relevant sections. Some observers argue that not only is the wording of relevant sections of the act not as straightforward as it may seem, but also that the Constitution should be viewed as a "living document" that should adapt to meet our evolving definition of Canadian federalism.

It is well-established that rent-seeking behaviour by stakeholders in regulatory and trade processes can significantly affect outcomes (Boucher 1991), and rent seeking by a variety of players comprises a third interprovincial trade barrier that can potentially reduce market efficiency and overall economic benefits. Limitations on competitor products being permitted into a given jurisdiction clearly benefit

domestic firms operating in the market, and so it may be expected that those firms will advocate for policies to prevent new entrants to the market. Regulators themselves, whether they take the form of industry-level authorities or government/quasi-government agents, could be expected to be hesitant to advocate for, or embrace harmonization of, regulations across provinces, as this could lead to a loss of the need for their roles. Moreover, these stakeholders often have a significant stake in, or are protective of, the regulatory framework they have helped create/oversee and are unlikely to embrace harmonization with other provinces' frameworks if they perceive them to be of lower standards (and potentially safety). Governments themselves are in many cases likely to carefully consider whether freer trade with other provinces is in their best interests, for either fiscal (i.e., loss of taxation income from products such as alcohol or tobacco) or political (i.e., risk of alienating industry support groups) reasons.

The final driver that perhaps has not led to the current system of interprovincial trade barriers but can prevent it from evolving or adapting quickly is the considerable amount of time and effort needed for things to change. There is significant momentum in current practices, thousands upon thousands of pages of regulations and often cumbersome legislative and legal processes to navigate (potentially within multiple provincial governments) in order for trade barriers to be reduced. This, combined with the propensity noted above for insiders to have a natural inclination to continue doing things the way they always have, makes it extremely difficult to change current policies, even if it would seem obvious that proposed changes would contribute positively to economic output, growth, productivity and efficiency.

BARRIERS TO TRADE WITHIN THE AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRIES

Alvarez et al. (2019) specifically identify a number of barriers that apply directly to the agriculture and agri-food industries, including dairy quotas, trucking requirements, business registration and professional licensing differences due to differing provincial regulations. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) observes that inconsistencies in a variety of regulatory measures among provinces effectively act as trade barriers, increasing operating costs and ultimately, prices for Canadian consumers. With respect to the agriculture and agri-food sector specifically, the CFA asserts that differing transportation regulations and a lack of consistency between the inspection processes at the provincial and federal level at meat-processing facilities are the two most significant obstacles to increased trade. The CFA (2021) advocates for the harmonization of meat inspection standards at the federal and provincial levels in tandem with the development of complementary transportation regulations.

That latter category of barriers identified by the CFA — the seeming inconsistencies between meat inspection regulations at the federal and provincial levels — is of

particular concern in the COVID-19 era. Significant disruptions were seen in red meat supply chains in Canada and the U.S., causing concerns for cattle producers and feeders as a result of cattle markets being unable to move animals between production stages efficiently, and causing concerns for consumers as a critical source of protein became less available and food security was threatened (Carlberg 2020).

Parallel systems for meat inspection in Canada (i.e., federally and provincially inspected) have a long history. Haines (2004) notes that, once again, legislative authority is provided to both senior levels of government on these issues, and traces the federal interest in the regulation of meat slaughter and processing to Canada's *Meat and Canned Goods Act* of 1907. This act was enacted in response to similar legislation that had been implemented in the United States due to trading partners' concerns over conditions in the meat-packing industry. The author notes that federally inspected plants differ mostly in terms of scale and scope (federal facilities tend to be larger and process a much greater number of animals), and have a veterinarian present most or all of the time, whereas provincially inspected facilities do not.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) provides regulatory oversight of food products for export and some aspects of interprovincial movement of food products. On its "Export Requirements for Meat" webpage, it notes that section 10 of the *Safe Food for Canadians Act* (SFCA) prohibits the international or interprovincial movement of prescribed food commodities without licence or unless the food commodity adheres to regulatory requirements (CFIA 2021). Meat products for export must be stored under specified conditions at facilities eligible for licensure under the SFCA, and part of the inspection process is designed to ensure that licensed facilities meet the import requirements of destination countries.

While both the shared/federal provincial areas of jurisdiction over the inspection of meat-processing facilities and the regulatory requirements for facilities licensed for the export or interprovincial movement of meat are understandable, Canada's current framework for meat inspection presents barriers for the interprovincial movement of products in this key sector of our agriculture and agri-food industry. Greater harmonization of regulations would have clear benefits for consumers (who could see greater product choice, lower prices and a more stable supply chain if outbreaks of diseases such as COVID-19 affect facilities) as well as cattle producers and feeders (who would have greater choice of delivery destinations for their animals if a COVID-19 outbreak affected a plant). If more facilities were able to market meat interprovincially (or even internationally), not only would there be economic benefits as a result of reduced barriers to interprovincial trade, but also it is likely that food security would be enhanced.

OPTIONS, COSTS AND BENEFITS

Canada has a number of potential strategies to address the considerable losses resulting from the interprovincial barriers to trade in goods and services. Practically,

at least three major options are worth exploring. First, efforts could be taken to help ensure that the relevant sections of the *Constitution Act* be interpreted more literally with respect to its instruction pertaining to trade among provinces. Second, additional interprovincial trade agreements, similar in intent and scope to the New West Partnership Trade Agreement (NWPTA) and others, could be devised and implemented among provinces. Last, efforts could be redoubled with respect to targeted harmonization of provincial regulations to remove restrictions on the mobility of both goods and skilled labour. It is likely that a combination of one or more of these strategies is feasible and would result in overall gains to output, growth and productivity in Canada.

It would appear from a simple reading of the relevant sections of the *Constitution Act* that the framers intended to provide clear direction on issues pertaining to the federal government's role, relationships among the provinces and even the movement of goods specifically. Part VI of the *Constitution Act* speaks to the distribution of legislative powers, and in several places addresses these issues directly (Government of Canada 2021). For example, s91(2) gives authority to the federal government over "The Regulation of Trade and Commerce," while s121 requires that "All Articles of the Growth, Produce, or Manufacture of any one of the Provinces shall, from and after the Union, be admitted free into each of the other Provinces." However, the inclusion of "Property and Civil Rights in the Province" is placed under provincial jurisdiction in s92(13) and some observers claim that empowers provincial legislatures to regulate interprovincial trade.

Having the Supreme Court of Canada modify its interpretation of the pertinent sections of the *Constitution Act* to a more constructionist viewpoint is not an easy task, and would come about in one of two ways. The first way would be for the Court to update its thinking on this specific issue. This would likely involve an expression by the FPT governments that they would be supportive of an evolution of the Court's position on the relevant sections, which the Court could take as a signal that the federation itself was seeking a more literal interpretation of the Constitution. The second way this could happen would be for the *Constitution Act* itself to be modified, but this may not be realistic given the extremely complex negotiations that surround any constitutional matters in Canada.

A more constructionist interpretation of the *Constitution Act* would incur a number of costs and benefits, regardless of the specific way in which that interpretation would occur. Restrictions on the mobility of labour comprise some of the most serious and costly barriers to interprovincial trade and these would not be affected by an evolving Supreme Court interpretation of the Constitution. Nevertheless, there would be improvements in the movement of goods from any particular province if they were "... admitted free into each of the other Provinces ...". The economic gains that would accrue are difficult to establish precisely, but the work of Alvarez et al. (2019) suggests benefits would at least be tens of millions of dollars on an annual basis. Moreover, the enhancements to consumer choice would provide significant gains in utility, given a greater selection of choices of, for example, alcoholic beverages that would become available to consumers in some provinces.

The main cost to this option would be incurred by economic agents who currently are the beneficiaries of restrictions on interprovincial trade. For example, in *R vs. Comeau*, the very reason why Comeau (and countless other consumers) chose to purchase liquor in Quebec instead of New Brunswick (and the same can be said of many other border communities across Canada) is that prices were lower in Quebec; the reasons for that could only be that taxation levels, costs or profits were higher in New Brunswick. Regardless of what combination of those three possibilities was occurring, if New Brunswick consumers are free to purchase alcohol in Quebec, then either the New Brunswick government will lose tax revenue or New Brunswick businesses will lose profits. Of course, balancing that will be the benefits accruing to New Brunswick consumers as a result of lower prices and possibly greater choice and to Quebec vendors and government who would see additional profits and tax revenue, respectively.

The second option for liberalizing internal trade in goods and services in Canada is to form additional interprovincial trade agreements similar to the NWPTA. Formed among the four Western provinces, the NWPTA came into effect on July 1, 2010, was fully implemented three years after that and was amended with respect to labour mobility and dispute resolution mechanisms in 2015. Although the NWPTA is the most recent interprovincial trade agreement, it is far from the only one.² For example, its predecessor was TILMA (the Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement) that was originally signed in 2007 between Alberta and British Columbia. A number of other interprovincial agreements have been struck, including the PARE (Partnership Agreement on Regulation and the Economy between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia) in 2009, the TCA (Trade and Co-operation Agreement between Quebec and Ontario) in 2009 and an agreement between New Brunswick and Quebec, also in 2009, that pertained to the mobility of labour and skills recognition between the two provinces.

The benefits that would result from additional similar trade agreements can be illustrated by looking at those that have been realized over the period that previous agreements have been in place. The NWPTA, for example, has been lauded for its contributions to helping create a strong and competitive regional economy, its enhancement of labour mobility among partner provinces, its contributions to the removal of red tape for businesses wishing to register and do business in more than one Western province, and its contributions toward enhancing efficient use of public dollars by providing transparency with respect to bidding and procurement (NWPTA 2021).

Alvarez et al. (2019) provided quantitative estimates of the effects of several of these trade agreements. They found that trade flows on routes between provinces affected by the agreements were higher than those that were not for the NWPTA, its predecessor TILMA, the PARE and the Quebec–New Brunswick pact. The impact of these interprovincial deals was found to be a reduction in trade barriers ranging

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For a complete list, see <https://www.cfta-alec.ca/trade-enhancement-agreements/>.

between one and four per cent, mostly as a result of regulatory changes in specific sectors that resulted in trade flows moving toward those sectors and routes where barriers had been reduced. Further analysis confirmed that increased growth in trade among provinces participating in the agreements was caused by the removal of barriers rather than increasing production in the provinces. It is reasonable to conclude that should similar agreements be enacted, similar types and levels of benefits would accrue to the citizens and businesses of the provinces who were signatories to those agreements.

It is hard to imagine that the costs of new interprovincial or regional trade agreements would outweigh the considerable benefits outlined above, but it must be recognized that there are some potential downsides to this option. Clearly, there are costs associated with negotiating new agreements, both in terms of ministerial and staff time and legal costs, etc. that are required to ensure any agreement is carefully drafted. A second type of potential cost, which was noted above with respect to trying to liberalize the interpretation of s121 of the *Constitution Act*, is that those who are currently benefiting from restrictions on the mobility of goods and services would see a reduction in those benefits. Such a reduction could take the form of increasing the pool of competition in the labour market (for example, if skilled workers from one province are allowed to compete for work in another province that would previously have required an expensive and/or time-consuming certification requirement), increasing the number of eligible bidders for procurement contracts (be they public or private sector) or increasing the number of competing firms that can provide goods in a particular region or marketplace. As noted previously, if interprovincial agreements lower government's ability to apply or enforce taxation, taxpayers of a particular province could be affected in a negative way (although, of course, they would benefit in other ways). Last, reducing the amount of red tape in provinces/regions — for example, requiring the acceptance of one province's certification of skilled labour or safety standards in other provinces — could make regulatory/enforcement staff redundant and potentially lead to job losses. Rent-seeking behaviour by this category of worker is to be expected out of self-preservation. Any loss of jobs in positions such as these is likely to be modest from an economic standpoint when compared to the overall gains associated with freer movement of goods and services.

A third potential option is for industries and provinces to work together to ease restrictions on a case-by-case basis. The idea would be similar to the option mentioned above of negotiating and implementing new interprovincial or regional trade agreements, but would require far less overall co-ordination and time than formal agreements are prone to. Individual industries, trades or sub-sectors of the economy could take it upon themselves (most likely in conjunction with the relevant regulatory or government oversight bodies involved) to work to reduce trade-restricting barriers in the interest of overall benefits to both the industry and the overall economy. For example, it is difficult in a major, modern economy like Canada's to argue that skilled workers in a particular trade certified to practise in one province should continue to be prevented from doing so in a neighbouring

province (or, for that matter, anywhere in Canada). It is difficult to credibly argue that certification or safety standards in, say, Ontario are so applicable to the needs of that province that those applying to the same industry in, say, Manitoba or Quebec are insufficient for quality workers from those provinces to adequately carry out their duties in Ontario.

Many of efforts needed to make this proposed option successful can take place under the auspices of the CFTA or even existing interprovincial trade agreements. Alvarez et al. (2019) suggest that potential components could include setting targeted reductions for exemptions within current agreements. Systems of exemptions were put in place to facilitate the successful negotiation of interprovincial pacts, but they fundamentally prevent the pacts from being as effective as they otherwise might. Similarly, the authors assert that regulatory reconciliation would be improved within the CFTA, penalties for failing to comply with provisions of the agreements could be made more significant, additional resources for staff working on improvements to the agreement could be provided and there could be an improved scope for the recognition of unilateral provincial initiatives toward trade liberalization.

This option's major benefits would be similar in size, scope and importance to those of the strategies proposed above and would apply to nearly every effort targeted to liberalizing interprovincial trade: improvements in efficiency, employment, growth and output. This particular option, however, has the added benefit of being much more nimble, responsive and targeted than alternative paths which would necessarily involve high levels of co-ordination at the government level. This option has the advantage of generating benefits at the micro level much more quickly than, say, more expansive formal trade agreements or very slow-moving modifications to legal thinking at the highest levels. Also, because many of the players (specifically, regional firms operating in two or more provinces) with significant stakes in reduced restrictions could be directly involved in negotiations, they would be best positioned to ensure outcomes are sensible for the particular sub-sector. This may not always be the case if an entire province or region were to be considered as part of a more encompassing trade agreement.

In terms of costs, there could be trade-offs associated with this proposed approach. For example, while the proposed strategy would allow individual industries to move quickly to improve co-ordination of regulations among provinces, it is virtually certain that industries would move at very different speeds with respect to that co-ordination. Those industries that arguably need the most help and would benefit the most from the leadership provided by their more pro-active (or potentially less complex) sister industries could be left behind while others move forward more easily. In terms of the overall effort required, it is also likely that this would be the most time-consuming option; for example, economies of scale/scope in negotiating would be lost. It may very well take less overall effort to negotiate concurrently restriction reductions in two industries together than if the two are handled in separate processes. Last, similar to the two options discussed above, whenever

restrictions are eased, those who have realized the benefits of reduced movement of labour and/or products are certain to be affected. It is likely that they will protest the loss in the political rents they were enjoying, and overcoming these protests (which could certainly involve legal action) will introduce additional costs into the equation.

CONCLUSION

The optimal strategy is likely to be that all three of the options outlined above should be employed in turn, starting with incremental steps and working toward larger initiatives. The ideal approach would be to have FPT staff in bi-provincial or regional areas involved with relevant portfolios work with industry leaders to identify the most obvious and straightforward opportunities to make progress on specific initiatives. Progress on readily identifiable areas will surely foster enthusiasm between jurisdictions or within regions that will spur new initiatives in related industries. From there, momentum could very well carry into broader agreements among provinces that could be formalized into pacts similar to the NWPTA. In parallel, FPT ministers (including premiers) and their staff should be discussing the potential for effecting change with respect to how the Supreme Court interprets s121. Progress on that front will not be easy. However, the end result will certainly be worth the considerable effort that will be required.

The proposed path will not be easy or free of barriers. It is always easy to keep doing things the way they have been done in the past, and change is difficult, particularly when parties involved have a significant financial or personal interest in the status quo. Those who are enjoying gains from the existing barriers — be they governments, regulators, industry associations or private firms — will work hard to prevent substantive change from occurring. These stakeholders will argue that standards are unique to their jurisdiction, that governments “can’t afford” to give up revenue or that they “must protect” their own citizens, businesses or employees. While working to ensure the physical and/or economic safety of individuals is a noble goal, there is nevertheless a good deal of rent seeking by gatekeepers to standards within an industry or political jurisdiction. Despite this, the greater good must prevail for the benefit of all Canadians, in order to ensure our continued competitiveness domestically and on the world stage.

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