

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BCEDA Calls for a Collaborative Response to U.S. Tariffs on Canadian Goods

Penticton, B.C., February 3, 2025 – The British Columbia Economic Development Association (BCEDA) is deeply concerned about the impact of the newly announced U.S. tariffs on Canadian goods. These tariffs pose significant challenges for SME’s, communities, and Indigenous economic initiatives across British Columbia. BCEDA believes that a **unified response** involving the Province, local governments, businesses, and economic developers is critical to mitigating the economic fallout and ensuring long-term resilience.

“The imposition of these tariffs threatens jobs, investment, and economic stability in communities throughout B.C.,” said Dale Wheeldon, President and CEO of BCEDA. “Local economic developers represent 100% of businesses in their communities. They are uniquely positioned to assist exporters in accessing new markets and navigating the evolving trade landscape. BCEDA stands ready to support communities and businesses during these challenging times.”

A Call for a True "Team BC" Approach

The **economic uncertainty** caused by these tariffs could **stall investments** in communities currently working to attract and expand businesses serving the North American market. BCEDA urges all stakeholders to work together to develop support mechanisms for affected businesses, including those in Indigenous communities.

“We must take a true **Team BC approach** to this challenge,” added Wheeldon. “Collaboration between all levels of government, industry, and economic development professionals is essential to ensuring that B.C.’s businesses—especially those that rely on exports—have the tools they need to remain competitive.”

Supporting Local Businesses and Strengthening Economic Resilience

BCEDA encourages **strong support for local businesses** to help offset potential economic disruptions. By **prioritizing local procurement** and diversifying trade relationships, British Columbia can build a more resilient economy.

“We recognize the Province’s efforts to expedite major projects and explore diversification opportunities,” said Wheeldon. “BCEDA is committed to working alongside our partners to support communities and businesses, advocate for practical solutions, and ensure that economic developers play a key role in the response strategy.”

BCEDA's Commitment

As the leading organization representing those doing economic development in local and Indigenous governments in B.C., BCEDA will:

- **Work with communities** to ensure local businesses can access emerging support programs and market diversification tools.
- **Collaborate with the Province and stakeholders** to advocate for policies that protect and promote local economic stability.
- **Support efforts to strengthen economic resilience** by helping communities adapt to changing trade conditions.
- **Encourage the International Economic Development Council**, based in Washington, DC, to issue a statement highlighting how the impending tariffs will negatively impact economic developers in both Canada and the United States. These tariffs threaten Canadian businesses and harm the economies of the 36 U.S. states that count Canada as their top trading partner, ultimately working against the best interests of economic development professionals on both sides of the border.
- **Continue to expand our Trade and Export resources, which are** available at <https://www.bceda.ca/trade.php> as new information becomes available.

“We will do everything we can to assist B.C. businesses and communities to overcome these challenges,” concluded Wheeldon. “Now more than ever, we need to work together to protect our economy and ensure local businesses continue to thrive.”

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Media Contact:

Dale Wheeldon

President and CEO

British Columbia Economic Development Association (BCEDA)

dwheeldon@bceda.ca

604-819-3809

www.bceda.ca

About BCEDA

Established in 1981, the British Columbia Economic Development Association is the leading organization supporting economic development professionals in BC. Through training, advocacy, and resource sharing, BCEDA helps communities build resilient and prosperous economies.