



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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US and Canada Leaders Promote Trade, Innovation, and Regional Collaboration

SEATTLE - Legislators from five Pacific Northwest states and three Western Canadian provinces concluded the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region's Economic Leadership Forum yesterday in Seattle.

The three day meeting focused on Trade, the Columbia River Treaty, Innovation on Autonomous Vehicles, 5G networks, Smart Grid technologies, Maritime industries, and enhanced border facilitation.

Washington State Representative Gael Tarleton, Vice President of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) said, "What tied all these important issues together for me is the incredible innovation happening in the Pacific Northwest, and the collaboration that is taking place across our air, land, and sea borders."

Legislators heard from former Washington Governor Chris Gregoire about the Cascadia Innovation Corridor and the progress being made toward several "big ideas" that the group is working on including a cure for cancer and ultra-high speed rail connecting Vancouver, BC and Seattle in under 60 minutes, all of which involve cross-border collaboration.

The group was hosted on a two-hour tour of the "Working Waterfront" with a dozen business and government leaders speaking about the importance of the maritime industry to the rest of the PNWER region, including the Port of Seattle, the U.S. Coast Guard, Vigor shipyards, the Washington State ferry system, the Pacific fishing fleet homeport, and the cruise lines.

A panel of experts on the trade war with China and the importance of trade with Canada and Mexico discussed the serious impact that tariffs have had on Washington state and regional businesses from manufacturing to agriculture, and the importance of doing the phase one deal with China as well finalizing the USMCA with Canada and Mexico.

Montana State Senator Mike Cuffe, President of PNWER said, "The time is right to move forward on modernized trade between the United States, Mexico and Canada, and I am optimistic after today's panel, and my recent visit to DC which included meetings with a number of the northwest delegation in Congress as well as the Whitehouse, that Congress will ratify the agreement."

Past PNWER President Larry Doke, MLA from Saskatchewan, and current PNWER Canadian Vice President Richard Gotfried, MLA from Alberta, agree the time has come to approve the new trade agreement, commonly called USMCA. Those provinces along with British Columbia, Yukon, Northwest Territories, and the states of Alaska, Montana, Idaho, Oregon and Washington produce vast quantities of commodities, much of which pass through the mega shipping ports from Portland to Vancouver to Anchorage.

Border preclearance for rail, ferry, and cruise ships was the focus of another session that also discussed the development of new pilots here in the northwest to enhance efficiency, security, trade, and tourism.

The Columbia River Treaty, the topic of a plenary session, had federal officials commenting on the process of negotiations. Minister Katrine Conroy, Minister responsible for the Columbia River Treaty in British Columbia, described the community outreach happening in BC.

The Washington State Space Coalition hosted a panel on the incredible advances of the huge space cluster here in Washington that highlighted the innovation that is happening in the private sector space satellite delivery systems and rocket propulsion advances coming from our region.

The session on autonomous, connected, electric, and shared (ACES) vehicles featured an impressive lineup of leaders from the area led by Tom Alberg, co-founder of the Madrona Venture Group. This was followed by a session on smart cities and 5G technologies and another on new drone technologies and how these are all connected leading to the future of a 'smart region'.

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Further topic-specific press releases are forthcoming. Photos available upon request.

Contact the PNWER office for additional information at (206) 443-7723 or visit pnwer.org

ABOUT PNWER

The Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) is a public/private non-profit organization created by statute in 1991. Member jurisdictions include Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Montana and Washington, and the Canadian provinces and territories of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories and Yukon. PNWER's mission is to increase the economic well-being and quality of life for all citizens of the region; identify and promote "models of success; and serve as a conduit to exchange information.