

prepared to enter into a balanced, fair and fully "free" agreement with Canada. Apart from expectations of the economic effects of free trade, this concern about the willingness of the Americans to enter into a balanced and fully "free" agreement with Canada also appears to be linked to Ontarians' not being moved to support for free trade in light of recent American protectionism.

The prevalence of this attitude could perhaps be diminished through the promotion of the benefits and attributes of a Canada-U.S. free trade deal, which offers greater economic opportunities for Canada overall, as well as its component regions and provinces, within the context of a fair agreement containing effective mechanisms and procedures for resolving disputes and ensuring compliance with the agreement.

Overall, the central message emerging from the focus group research is that Canadians do not know much about Canada-U.S. free trade nor about the issues involved in the current negotiations. As the quantitative research shows, they are at present split on whether they think free trade between Canada and the United States is a good thing or a bad thing. Whether they ultimately support or oppose a Canada-U.S. free trade agreement could in large part be a function of what information they receive on the components of an agreement and the likely benefits or costs it will mean for Canada and for their province, and from whom.

To this end, the research suggests that the proponents of free trade should accelerate and intensify their efforts to explain the issues involved in free trade to Canadians and to recruit a diverse range of spokespersons and spokesgroups to speak out in support of a Canada-U.S. free trade agreement once it is reached and its elements are made public.