

Atlantic Provinces Economic Council and the Economic Council, as well as on the positive impact that trade liberalization has had in the past on the Nova Scotia economy.

Jobs and development go hand in hand with trade expansion in Nova Scotia, an historic trader. Tremendous potential remains to honour that tradition, with big Nova Scotia-based companies such as National Sea and Michelin, but as well as with many smaller and medium-sized companies such as Britex, ABCO Plastics, Nautel, Micronav and Internav and many others, both in manufacturing and services. The federal government has created the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency as a first step in the direction of new growth. By enhancing and securing their access to the largest and wealthiest market in the world, Nova Scotians will be better able to realize that potential.

On another level, hard economic realities also point Nova Scotians in the direction of endorsing the FTA. Nova Scotians realize that, in the context of global competition and the need to meet that challenge, we are better off adjusting in a market of 275 million people than in a market a tenth of that size. Further, they recognize that the agreement provides us with effective protection against growing U.S. protectionism. In short, by striking the delicate balance between these realities and our strong desire to maintain our economic and political sovereignty, Nova Scotians understand that the agreement is a sensible course of action that deserves their support.