XX, February XX, 2016

Name

Title

Address

XXX, Saskatchewan

Postal Code

Dear Sir/Madame:

There has been discussion around the impact of TPP on manufacturing, the auto sector, supply management and the cost of medicine to name a few things. However, there has been no public discourse on the potential impact TPP may have on Canada’s construction sector. We believe the TPP will have a severe negative impact on Canada’s construction sector in both the unionized and non-unionized environments. This is an industry wide concern.

The issue surrounds Chapter 12 – Temporary Entry for Business Persons of the TPP. For this Chapter, Canada has signed separate annex agreements with 7 of the 12 TPP signatories which allow for open mobility for certain occupations into Canada. The majority of these occupations are in the construction sector. This is the first time the construction sector has been included in a trade agreement for Canada.

Of note, the United States of America, our largest trading partner, is not a signatory to any of these annex agreements and will not be participating in this Chapter of the agreement. Therefore, there will continuation of no free movement of labour between the United States and Canada.

The construction sector in Canada accounts for up to 14% of Canada’s total GDP and represents approximately $256 billion of work but under TPP this could be threatened. Our understanding, in meeting with various officials from Global Affairs Canada and reviewing the TPP documents, Foreign companies can now easily bid on Canadian infrastructure projects over $5 million and could in theory bring in an entire foreign workforce (who have access to Canada under the TPP) to complete the project. This would mean that any Canadian Infrastructure project (with public funding) could be completely built with foreign workers and all direct and indirect economic spin-offs leaving Canada. There is no requirement under the TPP to hire Canadians first for any work done in Canada. So, projects built in Saskatchewan can be built by foreign company and foreign workers while the unemployed residents of Saskatchewan sit idly by and there is nothing that can prevent this from happening.

Chapter 12- Temporary Entry for Business Persons is a very crucial element of the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement and it can severely harm Canada’s Construction sector. Since currently 97% of Canadian exports to countries within the TPP zone already occur duty free, why would Canada support such agreement when it could negatively affect Canadian jobs? We must let our elected officials know that we will not stand by and allow this agreement to pass.

Sincerely