

Joint Statement by Mark Sutcliffe, Mayor of Ottawa, and Maude Marquis-Bissonette, Mayor of Gatineau, on Interprovincial Barriers

National Capital Region, February 5, 2025

As the mayors of the two major cities that make up the National Capital Region, we wish to respond to the threat of tariffs and reaffirm our commitment to working together in the best interests of workers, businesses, and retailers in the Ottawa-Gatineau region.

Our region is unique in that it consists of two cities in two different provinces, yet functions as a single metropolitan area. In light of the emerging tariff threat, we believe this moment presents an opportunity to better leverage the economic potential of our region. For businesses on both sides of the Ottawa River, this situation could serve as a catalyst for stronger collaboration, fostering a resilient and robust local economy.

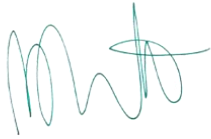
Yesterday, we announced similar measures within our respective municipal organizations to prioritize local and Canadian suppliers. These measures will help strengthen our economy and reduce our dependence on the United States.

We urge the federal government, as well as the provincial governments of Ontario and Quebec, to revisit interprovincial tariffs. We are calling for a review of these trade barriers to facilitate economic activity and enhance the horizontal integration of our economies. Reducing these tariffs would improve the flow of goods and services, bolster the competitiveness of our businesses, and lessen our reliance on external markets. Today, we will formally submit this request to the other levels of government through a joint letter.

At the same time, we acknowledge that certain interprovincial tariffs may still serve a valid purpose, whether to protect local producers or safeguard the French language. In some cases, maintaining them may remain necessary. However, given the current global context, we believe it is essential to reassess the justification for interprovincial tariffs. In doing so, we echo the concerns of our business communities and chambers of commerce. This review must be conducted with the well-being of our residents and businesses in mind.

Tomorrow, at the Big City Mayors' Caucus of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), hosted in Ottawa, we will bring forward this shared concern to our counterparts. We strongly believe that we must work together, from coast to coast, to ensure that interprovincial trade is smoother and less restrictive than international trade.

As leaders in our communities, we remain committed to collaborating with our government partners to find thoughtful and balanced solutions that respect provincial specificities—particularly in matters of language, local procurement, and security—while creating conditions that support the competitiveness and the success of our businesses.



Maude Marquis-Bissonnette

Mayor of Gatineau



Mark Sutcliffe

Mayor of Ottawa