



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **PREMIERS, GOVERNOR MOVE AHEAD ON PIPELINE PLANNING**

VANCOUVER – Three western premiers and the governor of Alaska have agreed that they will task their energy ministers to develop a strategic action plan to prepare for and prevent delay in the Alaska Highway Pipeline project.

Alberta Premier Ralph Klein, British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell, Yukon Premier Dennis Fentie and Alaska Governor Frank Murkowski agreed at a meeting today that the Alaska Highway Pipeline project is critically important to the prosperity and energy security of both Canada and the U.S.

The leaders jointly called for good faith negotiations in Canada between the North Slope producers and Canadian pipeline operators to ensure the most expeditious development of the project.

"I'm extremely pleased that my colleagues and I are working co-operatively and collectively to ensure the success of the project," Fentie, who chaired the meeting, said. "Construction of a natural gas pipeline along the Alaska Highway would generate major benefits for all of our jurisdictions both during the construction phase and when it is operational."

"Twenty-five per cent of the Alaska Highway Pipeline project will be within B.C., so it's critical that B.C. is involved in ensuring the regulatory, economic and First Nations interests of our province are represented as the project moves forward," Campbell said. "Working together with our provincial and state partners on a united strategic plan provides an opportunity to co-ordinate regulatory approvals with the federal government as constructively and effectively as possible."

"Alberta supports seeing natural gas from both Alaska and the Northwest Territories delivered to consumers throughout Canada and the U.S.," Klein said. "It is important that we work together to help ensure the expeditious and effective development of these pipelines and we think that Alberta's existing natural gas export hub provides the most economic means of getting natural gas to multiple markets."

"The best way to avoid delay in Canada is to resolve regulatory, aboriginal and operational issues with Canadian pipeline operators," Murkowski said. "Today's meeting is part of our effort to ensure that there is a co-ordinated expeditious process for the project in Canada."

The fact that the four leaders are working together on advancing the project will have far-reaching benefits, Fentie added. A united effort demonstrates a willingness and commitment by all four jurisdictions to work together to ensure progress and prevent delay.

Premiers and the governor also urged the U.S. government to come up with an alternative to its Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative plan to require all American travelers crossing the Canada-U.S. border to have passports by December 31, 2007.

They noted in a joint letter to U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice that although there is an urgent and ongoing need to ensure the safety and security of both Canadian and U.S. citizens, they are concerned about the effect the proposal will have on tourism, economic relations and cross-border commerce.

The requirement will significantly impact long-standing cross-border trading patterns and the movement of legitimate travelers across the border, they said.

About 16 million Canadians visit the US each year, and 14.2 million Americans visit Canada annually. 300,000 people a day cross the Canada-U.S. border. It has been estimated that the initiative could cost about \$2 billion a year in lost cross-border revenue for Canada. On average, \$1.1 billion in goods crosses the border every day.

The leaders also had a brief discussion on the Alaska-Canada rail link.

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**Attachment:** Letter re: Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative

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