



THE CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



LA CHAMBRE DE COMMERCE DU CANADA

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## Shaping Growth in Canada's Remote Community Economies: GE Canada announces initiative in partnership with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce

OTTAWA – Elyse Allan, President and Chief Executive Officer of GE Canada, announced the launch of an initiative to gain greater insight into shaping the growth of Canada's remote community economies and the decisions being made by global and national businesses to invest in these communities.

Joined by Hon. Perrin Beatty, President and Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Ms. Allan posed the question "*What is the enabling infrastructure that will engage Canada's remote communities in the 21st century economy?*" to dozens of business leaders in Ottawa.

As Canada seeks to strengthen its position as a competitive nation in an increasingly global economy, GE Canada is undertaking this initiative to place a business lens on the economic opportunities, challenges, best practices and business investment intentions in remote communities.

"The ideas that this project will generate aren't going to determine *whether* Canada's remote communities thrive or fail in the future: there is no end of evidence that many of Canada's remote communities are well positioned in the changing world economy," stated Elyse Allan, President and Chief Executive Officer, GE Canada. "We hope instead to work with others to find the best ways to accelerate and shape that growth for national advantage," she concluded.

With global demand for natural resources increasing – driven by developing economies – Canada's remote communities are among the brightest spots in our economy today, and will play an even greater role in *worldwide* economic development.

"The economic potential of remote communities is very much on the minds of Canada's businesses, community stakeholders and various levels of government," said Hon. Perrin Beatty, President and Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Chamber of Commerce. "That one of Canada's largest corporations and a Canadian Chamber member is undertaking an initiative that engages some of the country's smallest businesses – also Canadian Chamber members directly or through their local chamber – is a testament to the reach and relevancy of the Canadian Chamber to economic policy discussions in Canada."



## QUICK FACTS

- Most of Canada's natural resources – our oil and natural gas, our metals and minerals, our forests and hydroelectric sites, and other untapped resources – are in remote areas.
- GE Canada is conducting a series of cross-country roundtables over the next two months to generate a dialogue between Canada's remote communities, business leaders and government to discuss specific opportunities and barriers to entry in these communities.
- The initiative includes a targeted questionnaire sent to hundreds of business leaders across the country to gather never-before collected data on business operations and investment intentions in remote communities.
- The Canadian Chamber will utilize the material and incorporate the outcomes of the initiative into a policy paper to be launched later this year.

## QUOTES

"As Canada's Industry Minister, I can tell you that a strong national economy is built on strong local economies. Today more than ever, Canada's resource-rich remote communities have great potential for growth, so it is indeed timely that GE and the Canadian Chamber have teamed up to explore the best ways to maximize that potential."

- Hon. Tony Clement

"The forest products industry is already a cornerstone for rural Canada, providing 240,000 direct jobs, and representing the economic heart of 200 communities across the country. There is now a resource renaissance on the near horizon with growing demand in the marketplace as the global population increases and incomes in the developing world go up. Infrastructure investment is critical to growing and maintaining the communities sustained by our industry and leveraging the opportunities presented for growth by the bio-age."

- Avirm Lazar, President and CEO  
Forest Products Association of Canada

"In the same way it helped build competitive advantage for commerce and communities across Canada, rail will be an essential component providing access to national and international markets as more resources become economically exploitable in the remote locations."

- Bruce R. Burrows, Vice President, Public and Corporate Affairs  
The Railway Association of Canada



“A top challenge all communities in Canada face, particularly in remote areas, is ensuring there is a sustained, long-term strategy for upgrading and maintaining key physical infrastructure that is the life-blood of a community’s economic and social well-being.”

- Michael Atkinson  
President, Canadian Construction Association

"Remote communities are important to Canada because of our geography and the diversity of our economy. One of the most important things that modern information technology infrastructure can do is to remove the factor of distance to allow Canadians in remote communities to fully participate in today's economy and society."

- Bernard A. Courtois, President and Chief Executive Officer  
Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC)

“Mining is critical to Canada’s economy. Modern, reliable, and efficient infrastructure is essential to mining. Canada’s mining industry has, and will continue to make, a major contribution in this regard but needs governments and other businesses as its partners in completing the economic development picture in these regions.”

- Paul Stothart, Vice-President, Economic Affairs  
Mining Association of Canada