



Climate change is an economic issue

Western Canada's heavy construction industry knows that

Global warming is an existential threat. Protecting our environment is an economic issue because addressing climate change requires economic resources – money.

Economic stability and growth determine whether we have the investment dollars required to organize the response – the technological innovation, climate-resilient infrastructure, strategic initiatives – sufficient to the challenge facing every community, government, agency and nation. Canada, no less.

Economic growth grounds every one of the advocacy priorities of the Western Canada Roadbuilders and Heavy Construction Association. This is not a new position; it was the founding principle of WCR&HCA's advocacy when the association began in 1943.

But this advocacy has taken on added urgency, in part because of the heightened priority of addressing climate change.

What role does the heavy construction industry and WCR&HCA advocacy play in addressing the threat of climate change?

The heavy construction industry builds the infrastructure that carries our economy, largely trade — Canada's trade-to-GDP ratio is just shy of 65% – and the core infrastructure that will allow our homes and communities to be resilient against the extreme weather events that are occurring with increased frequency.

The WCR&HCA respects the fiscal and political challenges that face national, provincial and municipal governments.

However, those challenges pale in comparison to what our nation will face should we collectively fail to present to the public, the impact on our economy

and social programs if we continue to neglect investment in public core infrastructure including streets, sewer, water and wastewater treatment systems and transportation, in particular trade infrastructure.

Strong, reliable and seamless trade transportation infrastructure is critical to our economic growth, and to the revenues returned to our governments. Economic growth generates revenues to our governments that fund our social programs and strategic priorities, most obviously addressing global warming and climate-change resilience.

The WCR&HCA's core priorities address economic stability, growth and the necessary strategy Canada and sub-national governments need to ensure we can meet the challenge of climate change head on.



To learn more about the Western Canada Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association and its priorities, go to WCRHCA.com

WCR&HCA has set out in its core priorities to:

- 1. Advance the case for infrastructure investment & economic growth:** trade depends on strong, reliable, seamless transportation infrastructure – highways, corridors and inland, border and marine ports – to move goods, services and talent efficiently to market.
- 2. Endorse a long-term infrastructure program:** Our core infrastructure assets, such as water-control structures are vital to protecting our communities, homes and businesses, and cannot be allowed to fail us through neglect. If our transportation infrastructure crumbles, our trade-based economy cannot thrive. Economic growth generates the revenues to government that are necessary for critical services – health, education, national security, environment – and for all public programs that create the quality-of-life Canadians enjoy.
- 3. Advance a Western Canada Trade Gateways and Corridors Initiative:** 'Look West – Canada's port of entry to Asia': this initiative, gathering support regionally and nationally, is critical to increasing trade productivity in the West and raising its trade profile nationally, continentally and globally. Western Canada plays an indispensable role in efficiently connecting all of Canada to trade opportunities in Asia, and beyond.
- 4. Support the Canadian Free Trade Agreement and the New West Partnership Trade Agreement:** trade impediments or preferential procurement practices impair the free movement of labour, goods and services. Not only does protectionism hobble trade, and hurt GDP, it will clip the potential for free flow of ideas, innovative technology and initiatives that are necessary to meet the global threat that climate change presents.
- 5. Support open competitive bidding:** the best value for public procurement programs comes from open, competitive bidding. Single-source, restricted bidding or preferential tender practices ultimately cost governments and therefore taxpayers more, with no guarantee of quality. Governments today are pressed to manage revenues carefully; open, competitive bidding is central to that task.
- 6. Focus on Canada's next infrastructure report card:** we can't protect our homes, families, communities and future against the risk of extreme weather events without reliable roads, water & wastewater, highways, bridges and water-control structures. Assessing the condition of the infrastructure we have allows governments to set out multi-year investment plans to maintain critical infrastructure assets. That is an economic and an environmental imperative.



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