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Office of the Premier

**ALBERTA AND BRITISH COLUMBIA TO FORGE CLOSER BONDS
KLEIN, CAMPBELL AGREE ON JOINT BUSINESS MISSION TO U.S.**

CALGARY – A joint Alberta-British Columbia premiers and ministers meeting concluded today with Alberta Premier Ralph Klein and British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell signing a Protocol of Co-operation committing their governments to working together more closely.

“The agreements reached today signal a commitment between Alberta and British Columbia to work co-operatively to save taxpayers’ dollars and find more efficiencies to reduce the cost of government in our provinces,” said Klein. “We also committed to working together on the national scene to ensure that the voices of Albertans and British Columbians are more clearly heard on issues of mutual agreement.”

“The partnership we’re building will help enhance services and opportunities in both our provinces,” Campbell said. “We know that we can be even more effective for the people of our provinces by working together in ways that put the best interests of Alberta and B.C. under one roof.”

In addition to the Protocol of Co-operation between Alberta and B.C., ministers have signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) on child welfare, learning, and tourism (see attached backgrounder for details). The two governments have also agreed to establish a steering committee to examine other areas where Alberta and B.C. can explore opportunities for joint initiatives, work together to find efficiencies and share best practices.

The two premiers have also agreed to lead a joint Alberta-B.C. business mission to California’s Silicon Valley and Houston, Texas, Oct. 13-16. (A full itinerary for the mission will be released shortly).

“B.C. has been working to aggressively market our province worldwide, and we know those efforts will be strengthened by working together with Alberta,” said Campbell. “B.C. and Alberta represent over half of Canada’s energy sector, and our technology sectors contribute \$7 billion to our economies. From a competitive tax and regulatory environment, to new investment opportunities in technology and energy, we want to showcase the best our two provinces have to offer.”

“This joint business mission will highlight Alberta and British Columbia as leaders in high-tech and energy development to influential U.S. decision makers,” said Klein. “Premier Campbell and I will focus on opportunities for investment in our growing high-tech sectors. We will also promote our two provinces as a reliable, secure and abundant energy source. Of course, we will also take every opportunity to call on the United States to fully reopen its borders to Canadian beef and beef products.”

Alberta and British Columbia have a combined population of more than seven million people, or about one-quarter of the total population of Canada. Three of the six largest cities in Canada are in Alberta and British Columbia. The two provinces produce almost \$300 billion worth of goods and services per year, or about one-third of all goods and services in Canada (2002 figures).

The B.C.-Alberta Protocol of Co-operation can be viewed at:
http://www.gov.bc.ca/igrs/down/protocol_of_cooperation.pdf

The Ministry of Competition, Science and Enterprise Memorandum of Understanding is available at:
<http://www.cse.gov.bc.ca/ProgramsAndServices/Tourism/BCAlbertaMOU.pdf>

The Ministry of Education Memorandum of Understanding is available at
http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp_resources/lr/ab_learning_mou.pdf

The Ministry of Children and Family Development can be found at MCFD
http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/media_site/pdfs/child_welfare_mou.pdf

The Ministry of Transportation Memorandum of Understanding is available at:
<http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/nr/15665.pdf>

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