



November 3, 2025

The Honorable Jamieson Greer  
United States Trade Representative  
600 17th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20508

RE: USTR-2025-0004: Request for Comments on the Operation of the Agreement between the United States of America, the United Mexican States, and Canada

Dear Ambassador Greer:

The Exhibitions & Conferences Alliance (ECA), a coalition of the leading professional and trade associations from across the U.S. business and professional events industry, appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments as part of the public consultation process in advance of the joint review (Joint Review) of the Agreement between the United States of America, the United Mexican States, and Canada (USMCA).

For background, U.S. business and professional events—including exhibitions, conferences, meetings, expositions, and trade shows—attract exhibitors, attendees, and buyers from around the world to share knowledge and conduct business here in the U.S. These events help drive economic growth, support job creation, and empower small businesses by expanding market access for their goods and services. Each year, 46% of U.S. small businesses exhibit at business and professional events to help grow their businesses. These events further drive demand for restaurants, hotels, travel services, and Main Street commerce in cities and towns nationwide.

In 2025, our industry was forecasted to employ 2.63 million Americans while driving \$426.1 billion in spending across the U.S.<sup>1</sup> That said, trade-related uncertainty has weakened cross-border travel and negatively impacted international buyer attendance at many U.S. events. With year-over-year international arrivals to the U.S. set to decrease 8.2%<sup>2</sup>, and year-to-date arrivals from Canada down 21.5%<sup>3</sup> as of September 30, the impact on U.S. event organizers, venues, suppliers, and exhibitors has been significant.

Moreover, the regional competitiveness of the U.S. business and professional events industry is being challenged. Established in 2024, the Canadian International Convention Attraction Fund, which endeavors to attract major rotating international conventions, conferences, and events, has successfully secured events that will deliver the following benefits to Canada<sup>4</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> Events Industry Council, *Global Economic Significance of Business Events* (October 2023).

<sup>2</sup> Tourism Economics, *US International Inbound Travel Remains Weak for 2025* (August 2025).

<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada, *Travel between Canada and other countries — Unadjusted data* (October 2025)

<sup>4</sup> Destination Canada, International Convention Attraction Fund (September 2025)

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- 248,989 overnight delegates
- 5,271 jobs supported
- C\$636.6 million direct economic impact
- C\$43.7 million direct federal tax revenue

Within that context, ECA is hopeful that the forthcoming Joint Review provides an opportunity for the U.S. to reaffirm the importance of trilateral USMCA framework and our mutually beneficial trading relationship with Mexico and Canada, two of our industry's largest inbound markets. Since ratification of the USCMA negotiated by President Trump, U.S. exports to Mexico and Canada have increased by 46%<sup>5</sup>. This has strengthened the U.S. small businesses served by our industry, as well as driven overall inbound investment, wage growth, and greater supply chain security.

Most importantly, the USMCA Joint Review should seek to maintain and expand duty-free market access, including rolling back the harmful Section 232 tariffs imposed on goods imported from Mexico and Canada. In 2025, these have dramatically increased costs for our industry's suppliers, such as service contractors and experiential designers and producers, which are ultimately passed on to their customers. ECA strongly supports efforts to ensure that USMCA is the foundation for a mutually beneficial reciprocal trading relationship with Mexico and Canada going forward based on the elimination of tariffs, subsidies, and non-tariff barriers.

In closing, preserving and strengthening the USMCA is vital to the U.S. business and professional events, our small businesses, the U.S. small businesses that our events support, and our nation's economy more broadly. ECA appreciates this opportunity to share our perspective in advance of the Joint Review, and we welcome the opportunity to provide you and your staff with additional information or answer any questions as the process unfolds. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Goodwin', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Thomas F. (Tommy) Goodwin  
Executive Vice President

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<sup>5</sup> Brookings Institute, *USMCA Forward 2025* (March 2025).