

Annette Wionzek

December 27, 2018

To: House of Commons Standing Committee on International Trade

c/o Clerk, Ms. Christine Lafrance

Dear Committee Members, International Trade:

I am writing at your invitation to discuss the ways in which the Government of Canada should support small and medium-sized firms in accessing international markets.

I would specifically like to discuss the Government of Canada's support of small and medium-sized firms in the area of water export.

In February 2017, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) issued a document titled “Sector Trend Analysis – Bottled Water in China”. Within the document, AAFC recommends that Canadian exporters could take advantage of a growing bottled water market within China. It is clear from this document that the Government of Canada supports an increase in the amount of Canadian water being exported globally.

Water is necessary for life; without water, a human will die within only a few days. Access to clean water is a human right. Even in a country such as Canada, with its abundant water resources, at the current time, there are many Canadian communities which do not have access to safe water. If the export of water continues and increases, this problem will become more acute. Water should not be a commodity, to be traded or sold for the profit of a few, at the expense of many. Water is a gift that belongs to the people and governments should be protecting this gift for current and future generations, rather than selling it off for a short-term profit at the expense of its citizens and the environment.

I do not believe that water is or should be treated as a commodity. To do so is to greatly undervalue its worth. As the credit card commercial goes: “flat screen TV - \$500; all inclusive vacation in Mexico - \$1,000; clean, abundant water supply – PRICELESS”.

I do not think that the Government of Canada, either through AAFC, the International Trade Committee or any other department or agency, should be assisting in the development or expansion of new water export markets.

My recommendations to the International Trade Committee with regards to the export of water are as follows:

- (1) the Government of Canada should prohibit the export of water, and
- (2) the AAFC should stop spending taxpayer money on programs to expand the export of water.

My recommendation to the International Trade Committee with regards to general assistance provided to small and medium-sized firms is as follows:

- (3) the Government of Canada should consult its citizens and make decisions related to the nation's citizen-owned resources based on a holistic, long-term viewpoint, rather than a short-term, profit-driven viewpoint which benefits few at the expense of many.

Having lived in Canada my whole life, I have taken clean, abundant water for granted, but within the last 15 or so years, I have seen many items which indicate to me that, if we keep on our current path, our historical abundance of clean water will disappear in the near future. I am asking each of you to steer our government onto a new path; a path that protects those things which are fundamentally owned by a country's citizens and which are crucial to human and ecological health. As you may also believe, I believe that, "With great power comes great responsibility." As MP's, I encourage you to utilize the power granted to you by the Canadian citizens and to fulfill your responsibility to your country's citizens. I encourage you to make a change in the Government's policies with regards to the export of water and to create a legacy of water protection that will survive for generations to come.

Thank you for your efforts in the protection of one of Canada's most precious gifts.

Sincerely,

Annette Wionzek
Mother, Homemaker, Concerned Canadian Citizen