



To all P/T Ministers of Health

Dear Minister:

As you know, negotiations on the Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) are proceeding toward conclusion. My colleague responsible for this file, the Minister of International Trade, the Honourable Ed Fast, anticipates that an agreement in principle could be reached imminently.

Canada's negotiating approach has included preparedness to provide an additional, limited period of protection for patented pharmaceuticals. This reflects both a compromise with the Europeans and our objectives of creating conditions for a strong pharmaceutical industry in Canada and continued access for Canadians to affordable drug therapies.

This approach would have some cost implications arising from the longer period of market exclusivity for brand-name drugs and corresponding delayed access to the market place for lower cost generics. Incremental costs would affect drug plans on an on-going basis starting approximately eight years after coming into force of the final CETA deal, itself a milestone not anticipated until at least two years from now.

I want to provide all PT Ministers of Health across the country with the assurance that we are well aware of the implications for public drug plans and that the federal government is committed to compensating provinces and territories fully for incremental PT costs arising from the terms of CETA.

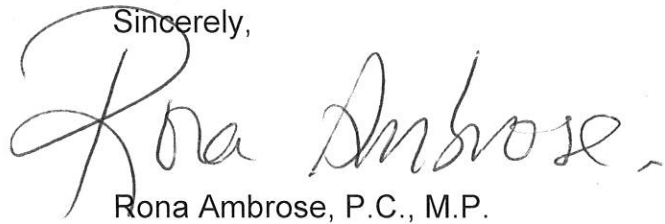
Further, I wish to assure you that Canada's current standard for data protection has been preserved, and that we have secured outcomes that directly and substantively address the interests and concerns of Canada's generic pharmaceutical industry. These outcomes include an outright exception from the additional period of patent protection for generic products produced in Canada for export.

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The Government is committed to engaging you on this issue when the CETA negotiations have been concluded.

I look forward to working with you on this and other important issues of mutual interest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rona Ambrose". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial 'R' and a long, sweeping underline.

Rona Ambrose, P.C., M.P.

c.c. The Honourable Ed Fast, Minister of International Trade