
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2011PREM0054-000573
May 19, 2011

Office of the Premier
Office of the Governor of Washington

Premier, Governor discuss actions to support economy

SEATTLE – Washington State Gov. Chris Gregoire and British Columbia Premier Christy Clark met for the first time today and engaged in a productive discussion about how the state and province could work together to support job growth and forge even closer cross-border ties.

At the conclusion of the meeting, both leaders were optimistic they could develop and announce additional joint initiatives to help achieve these goals at this fall's B.C.-Washington Joint Cabinet Meeting and Pacific Coast Collaborative Leaders Forum.

"Our relationship with British Columbia is unique and beneficial to residents on both sides of the border," Governor Gregoire said. "The people of British Columbia are our neighbours, friends and partners in the global economy. We will continue to work together to protect our shared coastline, secure our border and create jobs. I was glad to congratulate Premier Clark on her recent victory and welcome her to her new role."

"British Columbia and Washington state share a common green agenda that includes a strong economy and job creation," Premier Clark said. "Governments around the world are confronted with the realities of climate change and I look forward to working with Washington State to find innovative and green ways to grow our economies and create jobs for families on both sides of the border. I also look forward to collaborating with Governor Gregoire who has shown true vision and leadership."

British Columbia and Washington State have built a unique and close relationship unlike any other state and Canadian province. In 2010, trade between the two totalled \$7.6 billion, making Washington state B.C.'s largest trading partner in the U.S. An estimated 23,000 vehicles cross Washington and B.C.'s lower mainland border every day. The state and province jointly pioneered the Enhanced Drivers License to help simplify travel between the state and province. They have also joined together to promote mass transit across the border.

Ever since the 2007 Memorandum of Understanding on Climate Action between Washington and British Columbia, both have worked together to jointly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In February 2011, this partnership was strengthened with new agreements to limit carbon emissions from government operations and facilities and to promote awareness about the rise of sea levels.

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