



42<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF  
**New England Governors and  
Eastern Canadian Premiers**

42<sup>E</sup> CONFÉRENCE ANNUELLE DES  
**Gouverneurs de la Nouvelle-Angleterre et  
Premiers ministres de l'Est du Canada**

Stowe, Vermont, August 12-14, 2018

Stowe, Vermont, du 12 au 14 août, 2018

## **Regional Leadership at the NEG/ECP Conference Shines Light on the Future of Canada-US Relations**

*by Lana Bluege, Regional Program Coordinator*

The 42nd annual Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers commenced on August 12-14. As one of the lead representatives managing the conference, a lot of hard work and dedication on both sides of the border went into creating a successful conference to bring together leaders across 11 jurisdictions to discuss policy priorities on energy, environment, and trade. The panels and networking events showcased passionate and dedicated individuals from the region who view this conference as an opportunity to spark important conversations with governors, premiers, and heads of delegation.

No matter the topic or temperature of the discussions, civility and diplomacy were omnipresent, highlighted by armchair discussion between the host, Vermont Governor Phil Scott, and Jason Grumet of the Bipartisan Policy Center. This civil collaboration has always been a part of the long standing relationship within the region and it was noted throughout the conference that no matter the tensions felt between the two countries, the intertwined partnership of the region will far outlive the disagreements of those in control of the federal government.



*Jason Grumet and Governor Scott*

As Governor Scott noted at the start of the press conference “we leave our borders, political parties and differences behind when we attend the NEG/ECP Conference and enter the sacred tradition of fostering coalitions, building relationships and promoting civility.”

Because of this cooperation and unique relationship, the New England/Eastern Canadian region is the 14th largest economy in the world just behind South Korea. Premier Couillard noted in the final press conference, that the two countries share a centuries old alliance that should not be undone by presidential tweets or retaliatory tariffs. This alliance and regional collaboration is evident through the annual conference but it goes deeper than the public eye.

Through resolutions, reports, and NEG/ECP committee effort throughout the year, states and provinces work to promote solutions for environmental, energy, and trade policy. This continued work will help to address the important questions laid out during the conference on electric vehicles for example. Governor Baker brought up a real concern in terms of electric vehicle owners and range anxiety, “I really do believe that if people saw more places where

they could charge one of these vehicles they would worry less about whether or not they would end up someplace without a charge.” Through the work of the Transportation and Air Quality Committee, a regional electric vehicle corridor map is being finalized to determine gaps within the states and provinces and will be presented during the 43rd NEG/ECP Conference next year. This collaboration is just one example of the continued work being done with the various bi-national groups of experts outside of the conference itself.

For the past 42 years, the governors and premiers of the region have come together with the help of expert and dedicated staff to progress the fields of energy and environment and continue our prosperous trade relationship. I believe that Premier Ball capped off the importance of the NEG/ECP quite nicely at the end of the press conference as he noted, “I think what it speaks to is a success we should never take for granted,” he said. “I think many people wherever they go can get a lesson, they can be taught a lesson, that regardless of political stripes, regardless of your state or province, we find a way at this table to set an example in leadership that others could follow.”

