

**Prepared Statement of the Canadian American Bar Association for delivery at the International Trade Commission (Washington D.C.) on June 29, 2017**

My name is Ivo Entchev and I represent the Canadian American Bar Association (or CABA).

CABA is an associational forum and voice for the cross-border legal community. Our members include lawyers in private practice, in-house counsel, government lawyers, and law faculty and students.

CABA wishes to focus its submissions today on the continuing relevance of the NAFTA (TN) visa category for lawyers, which authorizes Canadian and U.S. lawyers to work for sponsoring employers in the partner country. (See Appendix 1603.D.1)

According to the Department of State, almost 15,000 TN visas (including for lawyers) were issued in the U.S. in 2016.

The lawyer TN benefits the U.S. legal services industry and the wider U.S. economy in a number of respects.

First, the lawyer TN helps to bolster the legal expertise of large, full-service U.S. law firms handling complex cross-border matters. Those matters can range from mergers and acquisitions and the cross-listing of securities to cross-border bankruptcies and dueling or parallel class actions.

Over 15 major U.S. firms have an office in Canada or a dedicated Canada practice group. The U.S. legal services industry as a whole is worth over 250 billion dollars.

A statement supporting the TN delivered to CABA by Paul Weiss, an elite New York law firm of over 900 lawyers that has a Canada

practice group and a dedicated Toronto office, puts it this way:

The complex legal work that we do for our clients with business in Canada requires that we have attorneys well-versed in legal and cultural issues on both sides of the border and that these attorneys be able to move freely between both countries. (See PW Letter at 1)

Some of CABA's individual members also describe how the TN visa has been critical to helping them build up the Canada-U.S. practices of their small and mid-size immigration or commercial firms. One immigration lawyer credits the TN for helping his firm grow from a 35-lawyer California startup to a national firm of 165 lawyers.

Second, the TN enables the very top U.S. law firms to compete for the best Canadian legal talent. Top legal talent is one reason that U.S. firms account for 75 of the top 100 law firms in the world by revenue. As Paul Weiss also emphasizes in its letter:

The competition for top talent among top law firms is fierce, and through the TN program we are able to increase the talent pool that is available to us. (See PW Letter at 2)

Third, the TN assists in the delivery of cross-border legal services to established industries, like oil and gas and financial services, which are big contributors to the U.S. and Canadian economies.

Fourth, the TN advances the business development goals of U.S. firms by bridging any cultural divides between them and their Canadian clients. The legal industry is after all a service industry. Better service means appreciating unspoken assumptions and context as well as the client's business and the culture in which it operates.

Finally, the growth of the technology sector has only increased the importance of the lawyer TN. Online businesses operate in a borderless medium across the U.S. and Canadian border. At the same time, tech startups nurtured in the Kitchener-Waterloo corridor in Canada are migrating into U.S. markets.

All to say, the lawyer-category-TN's best days still lie ahead of it.

***Those are CABA's submissions. Thank you.***