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THE CHAMBER FOR REGIONAL PROSPERITY

MEDIA ADVISORY

September 21, 2016

Canadian Consul General Louise Blais in Birmingham to meet companies, discuss Canada-Alabama trade

Who: Louise Blais, Consul General of Canada

What: Blais will be in Birmingham to tour technology business incubator Innovation Depot and meet with local companies to discuss opportunities and talk about emerging areas to do business in Canada.

When: 9:30 a.m., Thursday, September 22, 2016; the media are invited to speak with Blais, as well as Devon Laney, Innovation Depot president and CEO, and Mark Brown, who heads up international trade efforts for the Birmingham Business Alliance before tour of Innovation Depot.

Where: Innovation Depot, 1500 First Avenue N., Birmingham, AL 35203

Background: Canada is Alabama's biggest customer, with \$4.1 billion in Alabama goods being shipped there each year and more than 111,200 Alabama jobs dependent on trade and investment with the neighboring country.

Consul General Blais manages a six-state territory that includes Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. Canada is the largest or the second largest export market for each of the six states and total two-way trade between Canada and this region exceeded \$50 billion in 2015. It is estimated that over one million jobs in this territory depend on trade with Canada.

Canadian companies that have operations in Birmingham include Magna International's Kamtek, which announced a \$530 million expansion last year, as well as Voestalpine Nortrak, Cascades Sonoco, Stella Jones and others.

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