Deal involved more than just trade

Rick Bonnette

At last, a deal has been struck between Canada and the United States on the "Buy American" legislation.

This was the $787-billion American stimulus package whereby all U.S. federal government funding for American states' and municipalities' infrastructure projects had to be 100% American content.

In essence, this slammed the door on Canadian companies doing business in the States yet at the same time American firms still had unencumbered access to Canadian infrastructure projects. Remember the Canadian firm, IPEX, that had its pipes ripped out of the ground in California because they had "Made in Canada" on them? Our council was the first municipality in Canada to stand up to this American protectionist policy. Halton Hills was known across the country, and in American, British and Japanese newspapers. We had support from municipalities and politicians from across the nation. The issue landed in the Prime Minister's office and then U.S. President Barack Obama's office.

John Hayward of Hayward Gordon, located here in Halton Hills, was terrific in getting the word out through the media that Canada was being shafted by the Buy American policy. The Americans did rag the puck and ran out the clock, however, the new agreement does give a sound framework to open up the border. There are conflicting reports to whether this is a good or bad deal. The devil is in the details.

What I do know is both countries rely on trade and must work together in order to be prosperous. Who would have known that the Town of Halton Hills would play a significant role in this international story? More importantly, this isn't just about a trade deal, it's about people. It's about protecting Canadian workers, families, businesses and communities.

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Congratulations to Finn Poulstrup on being selected this year's Hockey Heritage Award recipient. Finn has been a tireless supporter for hockey in Georgetown.

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Good luck to Heather McIsaac, provincial boxing champion who will be representing Acton, Halton Hills and Ontario at the Canadian National Boxing Championships in Halifax, February 23-27.

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Congratulations to the following businesses that have opened in Halton Hills:

- Renaissance Woman's Boutique, located in Young's Pharmacy
- Inkwell Montessori School
- Dominos Pizza in Acton

—Rick Bonnette is the mayor of Halton Hills

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