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July 31, 2025

The Right Honourable Mark Carney, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Carney,

The United States and Canada have stood together through the defining moments of the last century. From Normandy to Kandahar, our two nations have shared more than just a border but a shared sacrifice, values, and a solemn commitment to protect one another. In Michigan, where 40% of our people have ties to Canada through family or ancestry, that bond is felt in our culture, our economies, and our environment.

Yet we write to express the outrage of our constituents, who are once again choking on toxic wildfire smoke from Manitoba. They are paying the price physically, economically, and environmentally for Canada's failure to prevent disasters that are entirely foreseeable. Smoke from these fires has blanketed the American Midwest, threatening the health of tens of millions of Americans.

Many Canadians and Americans remember the 2023 wildfire season not just as catastrophic, but as historic. Studies show that wildfire pollution from Canada led to elevated hospitalizations, increased mortality, and widespread suffering across the Eastern and Midwestern United States. Among the hardest hit were dialysis patients, children with asthma, and older Americans with chronic respiratory disease<sup>1</sup>. In total, the 2023 fires emitted 647 teragrams of carbon—the equivalent of running 516 million cars or matching India's total annual carbon footprint in a single season<sup>2</sup>.

Earlier this year, members of Congress called on Canada to confront the clear causes of these wildfires—arson and antiquated forest management practices<sup>3</sup>. Since then, rather than progress, we have seen escalation. Premier Wab Kinew has declared a second state of emergency in Manitoba, and in doing so has confirmed what many Americans have feared: that Canada is not doing nearly enough to stop these fires before they start.

Even more disturbing are Premier Kinew's comments dismissing the health impact on their neighbors to the south as "trivial," adding that Americans "enjoying their summers" is not a priority for Manitoba<sup>4</sup>. Let us be clear: this is not a seasonal annoyance. It is a public health emergency, and it is actively damaging the U.S.–Canada relationship.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.kireports.org/article/S2468-0249\(25\)00203-7/fulltext](https://www.kireports.org/article/S2468-0249(25)00203-7/fulltext)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-024-07878-z#Sec5>

<sup>3</sup> [https://tiffany.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/tiffany.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/canadian\\_wildfire\\_smoke\\_letter.pdf](https://tiffany.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/tiffany.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/canadian_wildfire_smoke_letter.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cvg9jrxvjpjo>

This is not a one-off crisis. In just three years, nearly 70 million acres have burned across Canada—the largest cumulative loss on record. Toronto recently ranked second only to Baghdad for the worst air quality in the world. Cities like Detroit, Chicago, Minneapolis, and Grand Rapids have joined the top 10 most polluted urban areas on Earth—not because of our own emissions, but because of Canada's downwind fumes<sup>5</sup>. Canada's laissez-faire approach to public health, security, and environmental responsibility is unraveling decades of goodwill and cross-border cooperation.

At this moment, more than 69 million Midwest residents—a population larger than Canada itself—are under air quality alerts. Residents of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Chicago, Lansing, and Grand Rapids are left to wonder why their health must suffer while Canadian officials offer excuses instead of prevention strategies. It is unacceptable for American firefighting teams to be deployed to combat fires driven by Canadian mismanagement while our own citizens choke on toxic smoke.

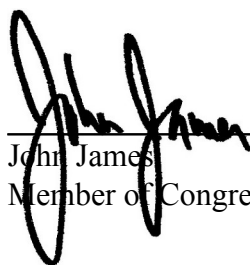
For centuries, the United States and Canada have stood shoulder to shoulder, but cooperation is a two-way street. We have stood by one another in times of crisis.

Americans want to see a strong, sovereign Canada. But sovereignty comes with responsibility. A responsibility to contain threats, safeguard our shared economic interests, and prevent toxic smoke, illicit substances, and foreign criminals from endangering communities on both sides of the border. Canadians should not be surprised if American leaders begin treating Canadian sovereignty concerns with the same seriousness Canadian leaders show toward American security and health concerns. The Premier's comments only underscore how unevenly the burdens of American patronage and sacrifice are shared between our two nations.

We urge Natural Resources Canada and the Canadian Forest Service to act immediately and decisively—not just to contain current wildfires, but to fundamentally reform the policies, practices, and technologies that allowed this crisis to repeat.

The United States wants a strong, healthy Canada. Michiganders want a thriving Manitoba. We are friends, partners, and neighbors. But friendship requires respect. And respect means protecting each other's health, not dismissing it.

Sincerely,



John James  
Member of Congress

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/weather/2025/07/14/western-fires-canada-smoke/>