

*For Immediate Release*

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## **Canadian grain farmers call for speedy passage of Bill C-49**

**February 15, 2018 (OTTAWA)** – Grain Growers of Canada (GGC) President, Jeff Nielsen, along with members the Alberta Wheat Commission and Canadian Canola Growers Association appeared before the Senate Standing Committee on Transport and Communications Feb. 14, 2018 to stress the importance of the rapid passage of Bill C-49, the *Transportation Modernization Act*.

“Bill C-49 contains many of the changes farmers and grain shippers have been requesting for a long time,” said GGC President, Jeff Nielsen. “Reciprocal penalties, a clear definition of adequate and suitable service, and increased transparency and data sharing will go a long way towards creating a reliable, fair, and accountable rail system for the future.”

In all, seven stakeholders in the grain value chain appeared before committee yesterday to provide a united voice and a common message that rapid passage of the Bill is increasingly vital. As reported by the Ag Transport Coalition, hopper car deliveries are decreasing week over week, compounding the grain backlog at elevators and on farms. It is expected that the situation will worsen before it improves.

“Any costs associated with delivery delays inevitably roll down to me, the farmer,” said Warren Sekulic, GGC Director speaking for the Alberta Wheat Commission yesterday. “I plan my grain deliveries out prudently so I can meet my payments and cancelled car orders and poor service from the railways have a direct impact on my bottom line. Farmers need C-49 now so we can stay in business.”

“Canadian grain shipping needs a strong and balanced regulatory shipping system for the future,” said Steve Pratte, Policy Manager with the Canadian Canola Growers Association. “Our message to the Committee is clear – pass C-49 now.”

*Grain Growers of Canada provides a strong national voice for over 50,000 active and successful grain, oilseed and pulse producers through its 13 provincial, regional and national grower groups. Our mission and mandate are to pursue a policy environment that maximizes global competitiveness and to influence federal policy on behalf of independent Canadian grain farmers and their associations.*

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