



NORTH AMERICAN STRATEGY FOR COMPETITIVENESS

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Monday, August 2, 2021

Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Chair and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Homeland Security
Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Chair and Ranking Member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Members of the Congressional Northern Border Caucus
Members of the Congressional Border Security Caucus
Members of the Canada/US Interparliamentary Group

Re: Time Sensitive Request regarding Travel Across the US Land Border

Dear Honorable Members of Congress,

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to ask you to direct the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to report to Congress with a plan to operationalize new border procedures in light of the COVID19 pandemic. In particular, we ask that DHS explain to Congress how, *if* directed to do so, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers could process vaccination status and/or negative covid test status at land border crossings. The US land border is restricted until August 21, 2021 when the White House will determine again whether to extend the closure or reopen the land border. If the decision is made to re-open, a decision we support, the operational questions are many and we believe it will require Congressional action and oversight in order to get answers to the questions which continue to impact millions of families, communities, and billions worth of commerce this summer.


As you know, air travel into the US from our North American partners has not been restricted during the past sixteen months, but the land border has effectively been closed to discretionary travel. The social and economic costs of the land border closure and restrictions grow every day they remain in place. We understand the necessity of protecting public health and believe that the US can do so while also easing the restrictions at the land border. The challenge is that CBP does not appear to have a plan in place to execute a safe re-opening without causing tremendous delays at land ports of entry. This agency needs to explain to you, and to us as stakeholders, how it will process the health information of in-bound travelers, *if* US policy requires it to do so. **For members of the commercial trade environment, it is also important to know whether DHS will assign appropriate resources to maintain the same level of security and efficiency at Land Ports of Entry (LPOE).**

We respectfully request that you consider sending a letter to Secretary Mayorkas as soon as possible asking DHS to inform you, and us, what the operational plan is for reopening the US land border when the Biden Administration has determined it is safe to do so. This could happen as soon as August 21st, so time is of the essence. As you know, North American travel and commerce represents over \$1 trillion annually and has been dramatically curtailed during the past 16 months.

Thank you very much for your attention to this urgent concern. If your staff would like to discuss this matter further, we can be reached through Dr. Laurie Trautman, Director, Border Policy Research Institute, Western Washington University at (360) 650-2642 or Laurie.Trautman@wwu.edu.

Respectfully,

Arizona District Export Council
Associated Warehouses, Inc.
Blank Slate Technologies
Border Policy Research Institute
Border Trade Alliance
Canadian American Business Council
Canada-U.S. Business Association
City of Laredo, Texas
Fresh Produce Association of the Americas
Integrated Strategies
International Association of Movers (IAM)
International Bank of Commerce
Invest WindsorEssex
Laredo Economic Development Corporation
Modern Stewardship
National Home Delivery Association
National Industrial Transportation League
North American Strategy for Competitiveness, Inc. (NASCO)
Ohio-Canada Business Association
Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER)
San Diego – Tijuana Smart Border Coalition
Transportation Intermediaries Association (TIA)
Transom Group
WorldWide Coaching & Training LLC
Zaro Transportation



Earl Anthony “Tony” Wayne, Ambassador to Mexico, a former Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs, and a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Canada