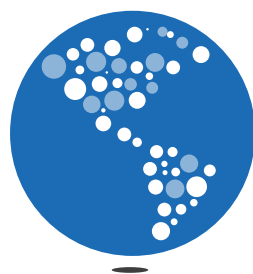




# 2015 Policy Agenda



**BTA** | **Border**<sup>TM</sup>  
**Trade**  
**Alliance**

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# Dear Friends,

The border trade community now has new tools in its toolbox to improve the efficiency of our ports of entry thanks to the implementation of an innovative public-private partnership program.

As a result of the program, which is strongly supported by the Border Trade Alliance, border communities are partnering with Customs and Border Protection to increase staffing levels when traffic levels demand and exploring the potential of working together to make important investments in port infrastructure.

In 2015, the BTA will continue its longstanding support for creative partnerships between the private sector, local governments and the federal government to improve the operations at ports of entry. We'll also be working hard to finally see to passage a long-term transportation package that enhances freight mobility across the nation and alleviates bottlenecks at the border.

We invite your company or community to join us in 2015 as together we work to create better borders.



**JESSE HEREFORD**  
Chairman of the Board



**NOE GARCIA, III**  
President

## Transportation and Infrastructure Committee



Chairman: Jesse Hereford  
S&B Infrastructure  
San Antonio, Texas

### Committee Scope

The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee is responsible for developing the BTA's positions on issues regarding mobility, infrastructure and cross-border trucking and rail policy. The committee also assesses policies affecting the presidential permitting process and promotes efforts to increase private sector and local community participation in the development of border infrastructure.

The Committee supports policies that improve transportation efficiency and that are aimed at developing infrastructure that is reflective of today's cross-border trade volumes.

### 2015 Goals

**Supporting a long-term, pro-trade transportation plan**  
Ensuring a pro-trade, pro-border federal transportation plan-

At a federal level, BTA will advocate for successor legislation to MAP-21 that ensures that border infrastructure projects are not only eligible for federal funding but that ensures state departments of transportation spend dollars on border region projects that enhance trade facilitation, such as was required by the Coordinated Border Infrastructure program under SAFETEA-LU. This includes promoting the eligibility for CBI dollars to be spent on freight rail projects. Any new transportation bill must also ensure that north-south trade facilitation is a priority by directing funding to such corridors as I-69, I-35 and the newly designated I-11.

### Freight mobility

The U.S. Department of Transportation is actively engaged in a national freight plan, as directed by Congress. One charge at a federal level is to help state-level freight advisory committees in the implementation of state freight plans. For example, in Texas, the Texas Department of Transportation's Texas Freight Advisory Committee, is designed to engage the private sector in the development of a transportation plan that reflects freight mobility as a critical component of the state's economic vitality. BTA will advocate that border freight and infrastructure issues are accounted for and promoted in this multi-state effort that utilizes a multimodal (highway/rail) approach.

In order to improve capacity and cost effectiveness of international trade between our borders, BTA also advocates dedicated public funding towards

- Photos taken by Gerald L. Nino,
- Chad Gerber and James R. Tourtellotte
- from CBP.gov



## Security and Trade Committee



Chairman: Miguel Perez  
Ryder Supply Chain Solutions  
El Paso, Texas

### Committee Scope

The Security and Trade Committee oversees policies and procedures at the land border ports of entry, promoting policies that encourage and promote legitimate trade and travel while ensuring that border agencies – specifically Customs and

mitigation of freight movement/supply chain impacts on border communities.

### **Advancing border transportation projects at state DOTs**

At a state level, BTA will encourage border state departments of transportation to make border transportation infrastructure a priority. As border communities compete with larger metropolitan areas over dollars, state DOTs cannot ignore the role trade-facilitating infrastructure, such as access roads connecting ports of entry to interstate highways and intermodal facilities, plays in increasing border states' overall economic competitiveness.

### **Improving border infrastructure**

#### **Unleashing the power of the private sector and border communities through public-private partnerships**

The BTA will continue to work with Congress, Customs and Border Protection and the General Services Administration to ensure smooth implementation of an initiative to allow private sector dollars or available state, county or local dollars to be used to fund border infrastructure and land border port of entry projects or supplement federal appropriations. The BTA will also seek ways to fund additional staffing beyond those positions already congressionally appropriated. Nothing in BTA's advocacy for public-private or public-public partnerships is intended implicitly or explicitly to call for: the establishment of tolls where they do not currently exist; the increasing of current tolls; or increased user fees imposed by the federal government. BTA's work in this area is

merely intended to give border communities more available options to partner with the federal government to improve their port facilities.

#### **Improving the permitting process**

The BTA will also advocate intra-agency coordination between the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. State Department to develop actionable means of dealing with the unique challenges of permitting and approving border-oriented projects. Through its international outreach, BTA will also advocate inter-governmental coordination between the United States, Mexico and Canada necessary to improve NAFTA trade flows between our nations.

#### **The importance of a multi-modal freight strategy**

A multi-modal approach to freight transportation can help solve critical international infrastructure congestion with faster project delivery and lower costs to both shippers and governmental entities. BTA advocates that no mode – trucking, rail, maritime or aviation – is unfairly disadvantaged by border infrastructure, access, or allocation of CBP resources.

BTA recognizes that freight rail has a critical role in moving international goods to and from our borders. Freight rail can move a ton of freight 500 miles on a single gallon of fuel. Each train removes 300+ trucks from increasingly congested border bridges and access highways. Rail points of entry are also efficient use of CBP resources used to monitor goods crossing our international borders.

#### **The development of new infrastructure financing options and expanded capital for the NADBANK**

The BTA supports the development of new methods for facilitating the long-term planning and financing of large infrastructure projects. Such new methods could leverage public and private-sector dollars to help seed large projects, particularly those that span geographic regions.

To that end, the BTA supports expanding the capital of the North American Development Bank by \$3 billion, supported by \$450 million in new paid-in capital, \$225 million each from the U.S. and Mexico.

### **Ensuring safe cross-border trucking**

#### **Supporting full implementation of NAFTA's trucking articles**

Twenty years after the implementation of NAFTA, the U.S. Department of Transportation has finally moved to implement fully the trade agreement's trucking articles.

The BTA has been a consistent supporter of full implementation of NAFTA's trucking articles and will stand opposed to efforts by certain interests to thwart a competitive trucking market.

#### **Consistently applied, border-wide safety inspection regime**

Cross-border trucking should be conducted in a safe environment. Shippers should choose ports based on the efficient movement of freight; truck safety inspections should not be a determining factor in which port a shipper chooses. Truck safety inspections should be applied consistently from port to port and not provide one port of entry a competitive advantage over another.

# The Border Trade Alliance

North America's premier authority on issues affecting the U.S. northern and southern borders, representing a large grassroots network of over 4.2 million public and private sector representatives.

Border Protection – have the tools necessary to carry out their important enforcement mission. The Committee also interacts with other North American custom agencies, the Canadian Border Services Agency and Mexican Aduanas.

The Committee has a Trusted Shipper Subcommittee, which is charged with monitoring and making recommendations for improving the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism and other trusted shipper programs in an ongoing effort to ensure that the programs are delivering benefits to its

members that are commensurate with the expense necessary to remain in the programs.

### **Innovative Trade Processing Solutions**

#### **Trade-friendly public-private partnerships –**

The BTA has played a leading role in advancing the concept of public-private partnerships between the federal government and border stakeholders to increase staffing resources and improve aging infrastructure. The BTA will continue to support the concept, as is encouraged by the launch of pilot program reimbursable fee agreements in El Paso and

the Rio Grande Valley.

Any P3 agreements and/or legislation must be trade friendly, however. The BTA's support for the P3 concept is not intended to imply support for passing any hikes in bridge tolls or other fees along to industry. More to the point, we believe free bridges should remain free. But the BTA supports reimbursable fee agreement pilots where there are clear, measurable improvement goals in staffing and infrastructure, and we will assess the pilots during their operation and at their conclusion accordingly.

### **Cargo pre-processing/pre-clearance –**

The security needs of the U.S. and our neighbors are better served when our borders are our last line of defense, not our first. To that end, the committee supports the joint demonstration project between CBP and the Canadian Border Services Agency at the U.S.-Canada border allowing U.S. CBP personnel to pre-process U.S.-bound shipments in Canada before the shipments reach the U.S. border. BTA will look to replicate the concept at other border ports. The BTA also supports a pre-clearance program involving C-TPAT and FAST-approved shipments of computers manufactured in the FOXCONN facility in San Jeronimo. Under this program, a primary inspection booth is located on the manufacturer's campus or other secure location; if the shipment is cleared, it can proceed directly through a specially designated lane at the Santa Teresa port of entry. Any shipments requiring additional inspections will be processed at the port of entry. The BTA will also advocate for extending this pilot to other import processes and support similar programs where appropriate, such as an agricultural products pre-clearance program at the Otay Mesa Port of Entry.

The support for this clearance extends to pilot which is already underway in Laredo, Texas that allows Mexican Aduanas to pre-clear cargo in the U.S. bound for Mexico.

### **Improving Trade Efficiencies**

#### **Implement consistent metrics for border wait times –**

As indicated in the July 2013 GAO study, develop a consistent and standardized measurement process for border wait times. Measurements should be compared to wait time goals and results should be made available to the trade community.

#### **Support CBP Centers of Excellence and Expertise –**

CBP's Centers of Excellence and Expertise represent a concerted effort by the agency to promote uniformity in import processes for specific industries in an effort to deliver greater consistency and harmonization. The BTA will support CBP and encourage industry support for the Centers.

### **Promote Free Trade Agreement Harmonization –**

The BTA will work within the NAFTA framework to promote free trade and tariff removal in those cases where a bilateral trade agreement does not align with NAFTA, and thus results in the unnecessary application of tariffs.

### **Ensuring Mexican and U.S. holidays don't result in shipping delays –**

Local port leadership for U.S. CBP and Mexican Aduanas should work together and with the trade community to align port operating schedules as best as possible to prevent shipping delays during holidays.

### **Advocate for necessary resources for agribusiness trade –**

U.S. ports of entry continue to struggle with obtaining adequate resources to process efficiently and securely U.S.-bound agricultural products. The BTA will advocate for an increased effort by CBP and USDA to train and deploy a sufficient number of CBP Agriculture Specialists and ensure they have the proper training as well as advocate for increased specialty functions such as entomologists for identification of invasive pests.

The BTA has also observed inconsistent processing from port to port of NARP-qualified products. NARP, the National Agriculture Release Program, is intended to provide a methodology for evaluating high-volume agriculture imports that are low-risk for the introduction of plant pests and plant diseases into the United States.

### **Promoting Cross-border Travel**

Alleviating border delays for pedestrians, private vehicles – Many border communities depend on the ability of pedestrians and private vehicles (POVs) to easily cross from Mexico into the U.S. to patronize local stores, restaurants and other attractions as an integral part of their city's economic health. As part of our commitment to efficient yet secure cross-border travel, BTA will, in cooperation with a member of Congress, request from GAO a study as a basis for understanding what is leading to increased reports of growing pedestrian and POV delays at the ports of entry and identify what policy

changes can be implemented to alleviate those delays and prepare land border ports of entry for an economic recovery that will likely place increased demands on the ports.

Strengthening trusted traveler programs – The BTA will work with GAO investigators and Mexico to assist agencies in both countries of reviews of the effectiveness and efficiencies of trusted traveler programs such as NEXUS, SENTRI and Viajero Confiable.

## **Public Policy Committee**



Chairman: Sam F. Vale  
Starr-Camargo Bridge Co.  
Rio Grande City, Texas

### **Committee Scope**

The Public Policy Committee Serves as the main advocacy arm of the Border Trade Alliance, representing the organization's policy committees' priority issue positions before lawmakers and agencies.

In 2015, the Public Policy Committee is focused on adoption of a multi-year transportation bill that reflects the needs of the U.S.-Canada and U.S.-Mexico borders and the trade corridors that link the three nations; and the continued implementation of public-private partnership programs that allow the private sector and local governments to partner with the federal government to meet the requirements of growing trade volumes by supplementing congressionally appropriated staffing levels and improving outmoded infrastructure.

## **BTA México**



Chairman: Rigoberto Villarreal  
City of McAllen,  
Texas

The recently reconstituted BTA México will continue to cultivate positive relationships within Mexico's executive and legislative branches to ensure pro-trade policymaking.