



May 18, 2020

Hon. Chad F. Wolf
Acting Secretary of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528-0525

Dear Acting Secretary Wolf:

On behalf of the Border Trade Alliance's public and private sectors members, we write to you today regarding our concerns over the potential indefinite continuation of border travel restrictions installed at land ports of entry as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

We appreciate all three North American countries' efforts to ensure a broad interpretation of essential travel that has allowed commercial traffic to continue to flow with relatively few interruptions during this unprecedented period. Allowing commercial cargo and individuals engaged in essential activities as defined by the Department of Homeland Security and its Mexican and Canadian counterparts to continue to cross the U.S northern and southern borders will help avoid an intractable economic downturn.

As you know, however, cross-border trips for shopping or leisure have ceased, severely damaging local economies that depend on border crossers. For these communities, especially along the U.S.-Mexico border, such crossings are essential to the livelihoods of thousands and to municipalities' ability to continue to deliver core government services. To that end, we urge that the non-essential travel order that expires on May 20 not be extended.

These border crossers have already been rigorously vetted by the U.S. Department of State and are in possession of Border Crossing Cards (B1/B2 visas, also referred to as DSP-150). Furthermore, BCC holders who desire to travel beyond certain specified geographic limits must undergo additional screening to secure form I-94.

There is no indication that BCC holders would pose an increased public health threat. We are confident that border state governors and CBP could, in consultation with the business community and border municipalities, work together to design protocols that would allow for the restart of this low-risk cross-border travel.

An indefinite halt to cross-border travel will result in an economic calamity for the border region and U.S. border states and increases tremendously the likelihood of a prolonged economic downturn resulting from this disruption of cross-border commercial activity.

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We appreciate your consideration of our views and ask that you contact us if you would like to discuss this important topic. We thank you for your continued leadership during this challenging time.

Sincerely,



Britton Clarke
President



Paola Avila
Chair

CC: Mark Morgan, Acting Commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Arizona Governor Doug Ducey
California Governor Gavin Newsom
New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham
Texas Governor Greg Abbott