



December 29, 2023

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711-2428

Dear Governor Abbott:

The Border Trade Alliance writes to request a meeting with you or a staff member of your designation to discuss the quickly deteriorating situation at the Texas-Mexico border.

The BTA on several occasions has written to you to register our strong opposition to the Texas Department of Public Safety's duplicative and costly inspections of commercial vehicles entering Texas from Mexico. The BTA understands and shares the frustrations of border state governors over the federal government's mismanagement of the border, but we believe that DPS enhanced inspections of commercial vehicles are causing more harm than good.

As you know, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in early December closed International Bridge I in Eagle Pass and reduced the lane capacity at International Bridge II. The result has been hours-long waits for private vehicles and pedestrians, which lead to consequences far more grave than mere inconvenience.

You likely received a disturbing report that a U.S. citizen re-entering the U.S. via Bridge II suffered a fatal heart attack while waiting in the hours-long queue. By the time first responders reached the man near the toll booth on the Mexican side, he was already deceased.

It is our understanding that at the time of the man's death only one inspection booth was open, a fateful decision of the federal government. However, the congestion around the international bridge is made dramatically worse by the DPS inspections, which slows the response time of public safety when their services are needed in the areas near or at the bridge.

You will get no argument from the BTA that the federal government's performance at the border in the last several months has been defensible; far from it. However, federal-state cooperation and collaboration at the border is needed more today than ever.

The BTA enters 2024 with a desire to work with your administration to ensure that DPS carries out its important role at the border with Mexico in a manner that does not unnecessarily slow the movement of freight, which puts upward pressure on consumer prices amid already high inflation, nor that harms the quality of life for border area residents whose livelihoods depend on a well-managed, functioning international border.

Continued

Page 2, Gov. Greg Abbott

We look forward to visiting with you or a staff member soon on this urgent matter. I can be reached at brittonclarke@clarke.consulting or at (202) 302-6225.

Sincerely,



Britton Mullen
President