



International Falls Area
Chamber of Commerce

June 18, 2013

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Dear Sen. Klobuchar:

The International Falls Area Chamber of Commerce joins the wide opposition to Department of Homeland Security's proposal to study and potentially implement border entry fees for land travelers.

The proposal indicates a continuing lack of awareness on the impact that regulation, fees and time factors impose on the trade and tourism relations between two countries whose citizens very much want to stay connected in the interest of reciprocity and healthy economics. And it ignores the important "back-and-forth" relationship between border towns.

Locally, adding a new fee to the current confusion regarding U.S. identity requirements as well as Canadian entry denials due to aged D.U.I.s ~ would be another blow for the economics of the sister cities of International Falls and Fort Frances. Borderland has recently undergone devastating changes in its primary industry of paper making.

Another add-on to bridge tolls and wait/search times sends a cataclysmic message to the one million Canadians who visit Minnesota each year, not to mention the impact on returning U.S. citizens.

Canadian spending on "our side of the river" is a key element in our local economy. The land-fee proposal flies in the face of a current endeavor between the sister cities that we call *Cross-Border Brain Storming*.

Of all the negative reactions to a recent CBC report on the proposal, the following sentiment by a Canadian online reader sums up the risk: "Go for it ~ I don't need any more reasons not to go to the U.S."

What's being proposed as good for the Department of Homeland Security would be bad for business between International Falls and Fort Frances, and between our countries at large. The focus should rather be on what hastens, promotes and eases travel across our friendly borders ~ with rationale toward economic factors and the bonds of alliance.

It is imperative that you take action against the proposed border-crossing fee, for the future of this border town and the relationship between our two countries.

Respectfully,

Faye Whitbeck, President

cc Honorable Rick Nolan, U.S. Congress
Honorable Al Franken, U.S. Senate

International Falls City Council, Mayor Bob Anderson
Fort Frances Town Council, Mayor Roy Avis
Koochiching County Board, Chair Kevin Adee

Cornerstone Of Our Community

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