

OPEN LETTER – US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN AND CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER JUSTIN TRUDEAU

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Prime Minister:

As border leaders all across Canada and the United States, we are writing to you jointly to raise our collective concerns over the need to return the Canada/USA border to a normal pre-pandemic state. As elected leaders, we are standing together to call on both of your governments to remove unnecessary restrictions and allow our communities to recover.

When this pandemic began, our border communities supported public health measures and federal recommendations. When COVID-19 was at its peak and border measures were effective at slowing transmission rates, we did our part to keep Canadians and Americans safe. Now, we have been left behind in the recovery effort as both countries have largely returned to normal daily life.

We know why our border is a special asset to both countries. Together, our two countries share the Great Lakes, major airsheds, migratory routes for wildlife, and countless transboundary rivers and lakes. We share hockey teams and grocery stores. We share a peaceful boundary where culture and community are not confined by a border. Our land borders are the most integrated in the world in terms of economies and communities and should never be closed to each other again.

That is the nature of our land border: constantly coming and going. While life returns to normal everywhere else, your government regulations have prevented us from resuming our way of life and economic base.

Air travel has been allowed to resume in such high volume that our air infrastructure is struggling to process the number of travellers and unvaccinated travellers are clear to travel thousands of kilometres across Canada and the United States. Land borders, on the other hand, are regulated at the expense of communities whose entire livelihood depends on the back-and-forth crossing of the Canadian-American border.

We are calling on you to lift vaccine requirements and unnecessary conditions like the ArriveCan app to cross borders. Border mayors have engaged health professionals and have received advice on best practices and it is clear that these measures are no longer meaningful or helpful and only serve to harm border communities and border community businesses.

Sincerely,

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