

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 1, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader Schumer,

We write to urge immediate action on our bicameral legislation, the Restoring Northern Border Travel Act, to reopen the U.S. – Canada border for non-essential travel and revitalize American jobs and tourism. It is past time for Congress to act and bring long-overdue relief to families and businesses in northern border communities, who have suffered nearly 18 months of hardship and uncertainty due to the travel restrictions.

The closure of the northern border was implemented as a temporary measure to limit the spread of COVID-19 in March 2020, yet the restrictions have been extended 17 times without any adjustments or relief for family members or homeowners despite the immense progress we have made in combating the COVID-19 pandemic. The reduction in cross-border traffic has had a significant impact on local economies along the northern border, including agriculture, small businesses, and tourism. These industries are the lifeblood of many northern border communities from New York to Montana that continue to inordinately feel the economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To the frustration of many, including the Democrats and Republicans alike who represent communities along the northern border, the Biden Administration recently extended the restrictions on non-essential travel into the U.S. through September 21st. While the Canadian government opened its border to fully vaccinated American travelers on August 9th in clear recognition of the close bilateral partnership our nations share, the Biden Administration failed to reciprocate these measures and delayed reopening the border for at least another month. To make matters worse, the Biden Administration has provided zero transparency on the metrics and decision-making process guiding these continued restrictions and still has not established any plan on how cross-border travel will eventually be restored.

The Biden Administration's unilateral decision to extend the border closure continues to unfairly punish American businesses and ignores the success of the vaccine rollout in both countries. We implore you to immediately consider our legislation to end more than 500 days of economic hardship on our northern border communities.

We appreciate your attention to this urgent matter and look forward to working with you to get this much-needed bill enacted.

Sincerely,



Steve Daines
United States Senator



Elise Stefanik
Member of Congress