



May 12, 2021

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. State Department
2100 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Gina Raimondo
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, DC 20230

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretaries Blinken, Raimondo, and Buttigieg,

I am writing on behalf of airports in the United States and Canada to express our support for your efforts to responsibly reopen travel between two countries that share a border and whose economies are deeply entwined. Airports in both countries have worked closely with federal, state, provincial, and territorial governments to establish and enforce strict health and sanitation protocols to limit the spread of COVID-19 and protect the travelers and workers who pass through these facilities. From the very early days of the pandemic, we have collaborated closely with government officials to do everything possible to ensure the health and safety of airports, and we are eager to partner with governments in both countries to resume safe and responsible travel between the United States and Canada.

Communities across North America depend on airports to connect them with the rest of the world. Airports are hubs of economic activity. Collectively, U.S. airports support more than 11.5 million jobs and account for \$1.4 trillion in economic activity – or more than seven percent of the total U.S. GDP. Canadian airports support 405,000 jobs and contribute C\$35 billion to Canada's GDP. Our reliance on airports has been evident from the earliest days of the pandemic as airports became a nexus for critical medical supplies and eventually vaccines to immunize people around the world.

Even as passenger traffic plummeted by as much as 90 percent, airports stayed open to ensure safe passage of critical cargo and medical personnel, all while remaining vigilant to limit the spread of the virus. Airports in the United States and Canada will continue to operate, despite steep and sustained financial losses, in order to expedite vaccine distribution and to ensure a robust economic recovery for communities across North America.

Now is the time to start restoring travel between the United States and Canada. The number of Americans and Canadians receiving the vaccine has been increasing steadily, while the number of cases in both countries steadily declines. We need to restore travel in order to ensure a robust recovery in the United States and Canada. Our economies depend on each other. Before the pandemic, Canada was our second-largest trading partner. Total trade of goods and services totaled \$718 billion in 2019. Businesses in both countries depend on suppliers and service-providers in the other just to function. That includes the critical healthcare sector.

Governments in the United States and Canada need to do everything in their power to restore transit between these two countries. That is why American airports remain supportive of the administration's efforts to reduce travel and cargo restrictions between the United States and Canada. We are ready to work with the administration to increase travel between our two countries.

Sincerely,

Kevin M. Burke
President and CEO
Airports Council International – North America