

July 30, 2021

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Blinken and Secretary Mayorkas:

The Department of Homeland Security's recent announcement that it will extend restrictions on nonessential travel at land and ferry crossings with Canada conflicts with Canada's move to open the border to vaccinated Americans and is deepening the already significant economic impacts of the pandemic on northern border communities and states. This in turn is causing our constituents – many the owners and employees of small, family businesses desperate to resume operations – to ask us how and when cross-border economic activity will resume in a safe and sustainable manner.

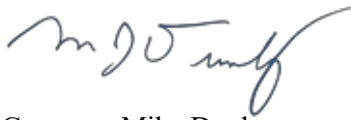
On behalf of the nation's Governors, we write to you requesting additional information -- preferably in the form of a detailed briefing -- related to COVID-19 travel restrictions that impact the U.S.-Canadian border. Specifically, we are interested in what information or consideration the federal government can cite as justification for this extension; what specific metrics would result in a reopening of the border; what intermediate steps may be taken to assist uniquely impacted communities; and any other obstacles that may exist to timely implementation of a thoughtful, clearly defined reopening plan, as well as how the federal government proposes to address them.

Our states have among the nation's best pandemic responses, and we are keenly aware of the importance of responsible public health policy in managing these responses. We also know how difficult it can be to make these important policy decisions and what is at stake if we get it wrong. It is our strongly held view as Governors that the public health data, science and advice of our own experts support a responsible, timely reopening plan.

At this point in the nation's work to get the economy back on track, it is imperative that the federal government work more closely and transparently with us and our Canadian provincial counterparts to quickly define and implement a reopening plan. We have no doubt such a plan can ensure the safety and welfare of American citizens during this ever-changing pandemic landscape.

We look forward to receiving the information we have requested and stand ready to work with your departments and the federal government to assist in the development and execution of a plan to safely open the border.

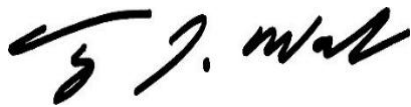
Sincerely,



Governor Mike Dunleavy
State of Alaska



Governor Janet Mills
State of Maine



Governor Tim Walz
State of Minnesota



Governor Greg Gianforte
State of Montana



Governor Chris Sununu
State of New Hampshire



Governor Doug Burgum
State of North Dakota



Governor Mike DeWine
State of Ohio



Governor Phil Scott
State of Vermont



Governor Jay Inslee
State of Washington

cc:
The White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs