



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

TODD GLORIA

MAYOR

February 1, 2021

The Honorable Anthony Blinken
Secretary
U.S. Department of State

The Honorable David Pekoske
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

The Honorable Norris Cochran
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services

The Honorable Lana Hurdle
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation

The Honorable Dr. Rochelle Walensky
Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Dear Secretaries Blinken, Cochran, Hurdle, and Pekoske and Director Walensky:

I respectfully request your consideration in lifting travel restrictions at our ports of entry. As you know, the San Ysidro and Otay Mesa Land Ports of Entry, as well as the Cross Border Xpress (CBX) cross-border terminal, have remained closed to non-essential travel since March 2020 under the pretense that it would limit the spread of COVID-19. Given the lack of data to indicate a correlation between the restrictions and the rate of infection and the fact that air travel across this border is not limited, these restrictions do not make sense. In fact, these restrictions, which only impact Mexican citizens, bare the appearance of being discriminatory toward Mexican nationals by singling them out.

The City of San Diego has seen the direct impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and we place the health and safety of our residents above all else. The border closure imposes an economic toll on our business community and our citizens, many of which rely on access to our port of entry. San Diego and the City of Tijuana, our neighbors in Mexico, have an interdependent economy in which American and Mexican nationals cross for essential business, work, and services on a regular basis through our ports of entry.

Much progress has made regarding our understanding of the COVID-19 virus, as well as the additional safety protocols that have been or can be implemented on either side. This week, the State of California lifted its COVID-19 stay-at-home orders, further illustrating the need to reopen access to ports of entry to help normalize economic activity. As such, we ask you to consider the effects of continued border closure in your plan to implement appropriate public health measures at land ports of entry, as directed by President Biden's "Executive Order on Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel."

We will continue the city's ongoing efforts in response to COVID-19; and coupled with increased safety protocols from CBP and Mexican officials, believe these actions warrant lifting the restrictions on land border travel for non-essential activities. This action will provide much-needed assistance to the economy of our city and our region.

On behalf of the City of San Diego, its business owners, and residents, I appreciate your consideration of our request to reopen the border. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Todd Gloria". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Todd" and last name "Gloria" clearly legible.

Todd Gloria
Mayor, City of San Diego