



## Office of the Mayor

WAYNE H. REDEKOP

January 25, 2021

The Honourable Bill Blair,  
Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness  
269 Laurier Avenue West  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0P5  
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The Honourable Marc Garneau  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
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Honourable and Dear Sirs:

### **Re: Canada-United States Border**

We are the Mayors of a number of municipalities along the border, some of which are among the busiest border crossings between Canada and the United States. We have previously met with Minister Blair to discuss our concerns regarding the reopening of the border, the nature of restrictions to crossings and protocols that apply to crossings.

We possess unique knowledge of the dynamic at the border, its impacts on our communities and on neighbouring Indigenous communities – in a variety of aspects – and problems that exist or could arise as a result of federal government policies regarding travel and trade across the border. For example, while you will be aware that a significant number of Canadians cross the border each day to work in the United States in various occupations, you may not be aware of the implications of policies that regulate how those individuals are permitted to interact in the community each day after they return to Canada. Whether they are health care workers, prison guards or other essential workers, they are going into a highly infected area, no matter which state they are entering, and returning to our communities with a heightened potential to spread the virus. Many of these individuals are faithful to a protocol that requires them to limit their movements within our communities; many are not.

Another example involves individuals crossing the border, in either direction, to visit relatives. Without adequate screening, these individuals pose a risk of spreading the virus in our communities when they come for or return from such visits. We are familiar with Canada Border Services Agency follow up for Canadians returning from travel outside the country, but this effort is seriously burdened by the numbers of individuals crossing the border on daily or short-term visits for what may not constitute “essential” travel.

We believe that our knowledge can be of assistance to you when you consider new policies or altering existing policies that regulate activity at the border. This is particularly true as you consider how and when the border restrictions will be eased and lifted to the point of reopening the border.

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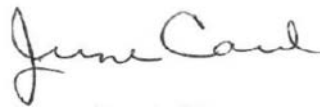
In the past, we have requested to be consulted on these matters. We are again respectfully requesting that we be provided a seat at the table where these decisions are being made and that your ministries and the federal government take advantage of our experience and knowledge regarding the border.

We look forward to your response and to meeting with you electronically to further discuss our role in the decision-making process with respect to border policies and reopening.

Yours very truly,



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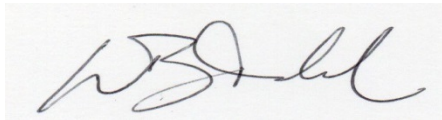
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