



**City
of
San Luis, AZ**

Office of the Mayor

1090 East Union Street
P.O. Box 1170
San Luis, Arizona 85349
Office (928) 341-8520
Fax (928) 341-8539
gsanchez@cityofsanluis.org

The Honorable Mayor
Gerardo Sanchez

May 15, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President
United States of America
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

RE: End of Border Crossing Restrictions on the US-Mexico border

Dear President Biden,

The City of San Luis, Arizona, on the border with Mexico, is a vibrant community of 36,000 people but our community has been economically challenged since the implementation of the border crossing restrictions that were imposed on non-essential cross-border travel on March 21, 2020. While we certainly recognize and appreciate the intent of the restrictions and the purpose that they served at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is our belief that the restrictions no longer serve their purpose and are only contributing to the economic demise of our retail, merchant and small business sectors. It is for this reason that we write to you today asking that you end the border crossing restrictions to non-essential travel effective May 21, 2021.

City sales tax revenues have been severely impacted since Mexican visitors have not been permitted to cross the border. Our border crossing numbers are down dramatically: cars are down 21.1% and total people are down 30.5% in 2020 when compared to 2019. And for the first quarter of 2021, reported numbers indicate a continued dramatic drop in cars and people crossing the border. Our sales tax revenues have been severely impacted and if it had not been for the Payroll Protection Program and other like-minded programs, many of our local businesses, merchants and other job creators, would have gone out of business. As it is, many are barely surviving and the continued restriction for Mexican visitors will certainly lead to many more firings and businesses permanently closing their doors.

We are ardent protectors of the health of our residents. From working with the Arizona Department of Health and Yuma County to getting as many vaccines in people's arms as quickly as possible, to mandating the use of face masks, and encouraging the adoption of measures as

mandated by the state and federal health authorities, we believe we have done our best to protect our residents. But we cannot ignore their economic wellbeing.

Just yesterday, the Center for Disease Control revised the protocols designed to help prevent the COVID-19, easing the requirement for people that have been fully vaccinated "can resume activities as they did prior to the pandemic" (source: cdc.gov) without having to wear a mask or physically distancing. Our COVID-19 hospitalization rates are among the lowest since the pandemic broke out in our region. Additionally, the State of Sonora, Mexico, has now been upgraded to green status, Mexico's lowest risk rating for COVID-19 positivity rates. Even more granular, the Municipality of San Luis Rio Colorado, our sister city directly on the other side of the border, is also ranked green by Mexican health authorities.

We believe that it is now time to reopen our economy. Please know that we remain unwavering stewards of the health of our residents just as we remain committed to promoting the economic growth and sustainability of our economy. We thank you for taking this urgent request into consideration and hope that you will soon be able to visit San Luis to see what a vibrant community we have become by remaining focused on our growth and committed to implementing policies that promote our continued development.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Luis', written in a cursive style.

Mayor

cc: The Honorable Doug Ducey, Governor, State of Arizona
Arizona Congressional Delegation
His Excellency Esteban Moctezuma, Ambassador of Mexico to the United States