



Embracing our Heritage, Advancing our Future

May 17, 2021

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

RE: Ending Border Crossing Restriction for Non-Essential Travel

Dear Mr. President,

On behalf of the City of Douglas I write to ask that you end the border crossing restrictions that prevent non-essential travel between the U.S. and Mexico. As a border community, the City of Douglas is dependent on visitors from Mexico for our retail, merchant and service sectors. We estimate that as much as 70% of our sales tax revenues can be attributed to our Mexican visitors, revenues that have been severely impacted since the restrictions were imposed in March of 2020.

Border crossing restrictions were at one time essential in the fight against the spread of COVID-19. Until we had a better understanding of the virus, and while we waited for a vaccine, these measures were very helpful but we believe that it is now time for those restrictions to be lifted.

We have worked extensively with Cochise County, the Arizona Department of Health Services and our health care providers to implement the necessary measures to protect the health of our residents. We have also worked to get as many vaccines in people's arms as quickly as possible as this is the best measure to fight this disease in the long run. We instituted a number of measures that have contributed to this effort, from mandating the use of face masks and adhering to social distancing and hand-washing protocols at great cost to the City, to our schools and to our local businesses.

Many of our restaurants, downtown merchants, and our retail sector as a whole, are barely surviving. Many of them have relied on the lifeline that Payroll Protection Program offered, but that is a short-term situation. The long-term viability of our community depends on the reopening of the border and allowing visitors to eat in our restaurants, stay in our hotels, visit our doctors and enjoy other tourism activities that we have to offer.

With the issuance of the new guidelines by the Centers for Disease Control, the higher rates of vaccination and the far lower rates of hospitalization, we believe the time is right to lift these restrictions and allow visitors to cross as they did before.

We stand ready to work with you and your Administration to restore the economic viability of the border region and to protecting the health of our residents.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Donald C. Huish".

Donald C. Huish
Mayor

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