



December 20, 2023

Honorable Troy A. Miller
Acting Commissioner
U. S. Customs and Border Protection
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington D.C. 20004

Dear Acting Commissioner Miller:

On behalf of our respective state business organizations which collectively represent thousands of employers and 5.9 million employees who create trillions of dollars in annual economic output, we respectfully request that the U. S. Customs and Border Protection agency reverse the closure of international rail crossings at Eagle Pass and El Paso. These closures are creating great economic harm to our nation's manufacturers, farmers, and consumers, and these routes should immediately be reopened to protect commerce and prevent further damage to our economy.

The Eagle Pass and El Paso border crossings represent 45 percent of cross-border rail traffic for American rail carriers Union Pacific and BNSF. There is not enough capacity at other gateways to reroute the freight rail, especially with few days remaining before the Christmas holiday.

Every day that the border is closed, American railroads are forced to embargo goods on nearly 100 trains and 10,000 rail cars. They are not accepting new shipments. The closures are impacting a wide range of industries including grain, automobile, food and beverage, cement, chemicals, electronics, and more.

There is no doubt that the federal government needs a solution to the migrant immigration issue which is a complex humanitarian crisis.

However, shutting down key entry points for commerce with our nation's largest trading partner is not the answer. Railroads are committed to doing their part to look for people and contraband that impact safety and security. This includes using their own employees, police forces, and technology including an x-ray system that uses gamma ray imaging to monitor freight.

Businesses and consumers in our states cannot afford to for manufactured products and agricultural commodities to sit during one of the busiest times of the year. These two international rail crossings need to be immediately reopened.

Thank you.

Randy Zook

Randy Zook
Arkansas Chamber of Commerce
Associated Industries of Arkansas

Lance Hastings

Lance Hastings
California Manufacturers & Technology Association

Alex LaBeau

Alex LaBeau
Idaho Association of Commerce & Industry



Mark Denzler
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Rob Karr
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Brian Burton
Indiana Manufacturers' Association



Michael Ralston
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Frank Jemley

Frank Jemley
Kentucky Association of Manufacturers



John Walsh
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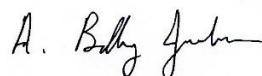
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