

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 13, 2021

The Honorable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

We write today regarding the situation in the Northwest Angle (“the Angle”) of Minnesota. We ask that you expeditiously allow for travel to and from the non-contiguous United States through Canada in order to facilitate regular commerce with the community and allow for American citizens to reunify with their property or loved ones.

With widespread COVID-19 vaccinations well underway in the U.S. and plummeting infection rates, it should be possible to coordinate between governments a corridor between the Angle and the mainland U.S. for American citizens while respecting the public health protocols of Canada. We are aware of efforts to ease restrictions for border crossings in other non-contiguous areas of the United States. We ask that you build upon these efforts to allow for travel directly to and from non-contiguous American land without stopping on Canadian land. This solution will have the dual benefit of allowing the Angle economy to rebuild from the over year-long closure while minimizing risk of infection between American and Canadian citizens.

The Northwest Angle is an area of Northern Minnesota that is only accessible by land through Canada. As a result of border closures stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, Angle citizens living there have been completely cut off from their fellow Americans. Additionally, property owners have been unable to visit and maintain their property for the duration of the border closures, which have been extended each month for over a year. Finally, the Angle economy, which heavily relies on tourism, has been at a complete stand-still without an inflow of travelers crossing the border. This situation, while untenable on its own, has required the community to make great sacrifices to survive the pandemic. With the continued extensions of the border closure seeming to not have an end in sight, the residents of the Angle and its small business owners are desperate.

Unfortunately, efforts to find a mutually agreeable solution to reopen the Angle to allow for resumption of travel and family reunification have so far been unsuccessful. As of Wednesday, nearly 60% the adult population of the United States have at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine while 45% are fully vaccinated. Infection rates for the virus are down over 80% from the beginning of the year. As a result, state economies are beginning to reopen or provide concrete timelines for reverting back to normalcy.

While we appreciate that Canada has challenges of its own in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, we believe that there are solutions that can allow for American citizens to travel freely to the Angle while minimizing or altogether eliminating risk of further spread. Creating a corridor for direct travel between contiguous and non-contiguous areas of the United States will address both goals while respecting American sovereignty as it relates to decisions of reopening the economy.

We are aware that the issue of the Angle has been raised by numerous others on both sides of the border. We respectfully request that you heed those calls and allow for direct travel for Americans to American territory so that our communities can recover from this pandemic.

Sincerely,



Michelle Fischbach
Member of Congress



Peter Stauber
Member of Congress



Tom Emmer
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Finance
The Honorable Bill Blair, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness
The Honorable Kirsten Hillman, Ambassador of Canada to the United States