

24-Hour Commercial Border Crossing Access

Issue

Transportation and logistics plays a critical role in our economy, as it supports a variety of industries across the country. It is in the best interest of Canada to expand trade linkages with the United States through transportation crossings and corridors that link Canada to the United States to facilitate a growing trading market. A renewed effort is needed to eliminate the obstacles that continue to prevent the expansion of commercial port facilities.

Background

Canada and the U.S. enjoy one of the most prosperous relationships in the world, with a staggering volume of bilateral trade totaling \$886 billion (CDN) in 2015¹ as well as close to 400,000² people crossing our shared border each day.

Total trade to the United States by province was as follows for 2016³:

Province	Total Exports to US	Total Imports from the US
Ontario	\$206,516	\$189,243
Alberta	\$68,041	\$16,386
Quebec	\$57,067	\$23,770
British Columbia	\$21,253	\$19,651
Saskatchewan	\$12,871	\$7,562
New Brunswick	\$9,732	\$4,097
Manitoba	\$9,189	\$15,269
Newfoundland & Labrador	\$4,972	\$1,286
Nova Scotia	\$3,649	\$1,032
Prince Edward Island	\$926	\$30,087

- *Value in millions of Canadian Dollars*

Even with this important trading relationship and the importance of border services and customs via all modes of transport, a current disparity in the relationship between trade, population, gross domestic product and the number of border crossing in each province currently exists across our country. Ontario, Canada's largest provincial exporter to the U.S. has 13 24-hour border crossings, while Alberta, the second largest, only has one.

¹ http://can-am.gc.ca/relations/commercial_relations_commerciales.aspx?lang=eng

² http://can-am.gc.ca/relations/border_frontiere.aspx?lang=eng

³ Statistics Canada & US Census Bureau - Trade Data Online: <https://www.ic.gc.ca/>

	24-Hour Crossings	Total Crossings	Population (2016)
British Columbia	8	19	4,751,600
Alberta	1	6	4,252,900
Saskatchewan	2	12	1,150,600
Manitoba	3	16	1,318,100
Ontario	13	14	13,983,000
Quebec	21	30	8,326,100
New Brunswick	12	18	756,800

In addition to limited hours, another barrier to our border crossings is a lack of an Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) at key ports of entry, which facilitates the electronic transmission and interchange of cargo, release and accounting data issued by customs brokers.

It is critical that we encourage the government to remove any barriers or encumbrances on imports and exports of our key sectors between Canada and the U.S. and work to improve international trade by removing pressure and congestion on our 24-hour commercial ports and corridors. Additionally, we must ensure that we can expedite legitimate and vital cross-border trade and travel through the implementation of efficient and effective security and technology measures.

Transportation access is fuel for economic development. Regions with flexible, efficient transportation networks can access product markets, suppliers, vendors, workers and customers more efficiently and more cost effectively than those that do not. Investment leads to trade, as companies' activities increasingly become part of the global value chain, necessitating not only clear and open investment rules, but also ensuring that goods and services produced in our region can be transported easily to market. To be part of this chain, Canada and the United States must not only be open to these cross-border opportunities, but also must ensure that the goods and services produced have easy access to markets in both countries and internationally.

It is in the best interest of Canada to expand trade linkages with the United States through transportation crossings and corridors that link Canada to the United States to facilitate a growing trading market. A renewed effort is needed to eliminate the obstacles that continue to prevent the expansion of 24-hour commercial port facilities and promote this as access to our north-south trade corridors.

Recommendations

That the federal government:

1. Accelerate dialogue with U.S. counterparts to provide support for border initiatives and ensure that the hours and services of our border crossings consistently match the U.S. in both traveler and commercial services.
2. Ensure that provinces with high volumes of bilateral trade and corridor traffic have access to sufficient commercial border services and that all provinces have more than a single 24-hour full service commercial port of entry.
3. Ensure border crossings are equipped with efficient and effective security and technology measures, such as full Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) equivalency.