

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 4, 2024

The Honorable Troy A. Miller  
Commissioner  
Customs and Border Protection  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 1500N  
Washington, D.C. 20229

Dear Commissioner Miller,

On November 20, 2024, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) announced a joint agreement to adjust the hours of operation for 38 ports of entry along the northern border, including reductions at six Land Ports of Entry (LPOEs) in Vermont, beginning on January 6, 2025. This action is the reverse to our December 28, 2022 request to increase hours at all of Vermont's LPOEs. This decision is of great concern to our constituents in border communities and surrounding areas, as it negatively affects public safety, the local economy, and the availability of workers in critical industries.

This joint agreement between CBP and CBSA will leave Vermont with only six LPOEs with 24-hour service, halving the number of LPOEs operating with 24-hour service prior to the pandemic. This decision will harm the communities of Alburgh, Canaan, Derby Line, North Troy, and West Berkshire, where the hours of operations are being reduced. This significant reduction in hours will increase border wait times and burden cross-border workers and employers. Specifically, the late hour of opening time of these ports, at 8:00 AM, substantially restricts the ability of workers to cross the border in time for work.

While we know staffing is a challenge across CBP, the reduced border hours hurt border communities, as well as CBP employees. We have already heard from CBP employees who are seeing their hours reduced—a fact that flies in the face of CBP's stated rationale for the reductions, to reposition staff and resources to other needed locations.

As you know, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) dedicated \$3.4 billion to modernizing 26 LPOEs throughout the country, including over \$200 million for major construction projects at five of Vermont's LPOEs: Highgate Springs, Alburgh Springs, Beebe Plain, Norton, and Richford—one of which will now permanently operate under reduced hours beginning January 6, 2024.

We ask that you take immediate action to reverse your November 20<sup>th</sup> decision and return all facilities in Vermont to pre-pandemic hours. Additionally, please provide a staff briefing by December 18, 2024, on how the administration is utilizing IIJA funding to bolster Vermont's LPOEs as well as the process and data used to reach the decision to reduce operating hours at these ports. We appreciate your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



BERNIE SANDERS  
United States Senator



PETER WELCH  
United States Senator



BECCA BALINT  
United States Representative