



June 4, 2021

Hon. Omar Alghabra, PC, MP
Minister of Transport
Transport Canada
330 Sparks Street
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. K1A 0N5

Hon. Bill Blair, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Public Safety and Emergency
Preparedness
269 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. K1A 0P8

Hon. Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Health
Brooke Claxton Building,
Tunney's Pasture, Postal Locator: 0906C
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0K9

Re: The Safe Restart of United States - Canada Transborder Air Travel

Dear Minister:

On behalf of the National Airlines Council of Canada¹ (NACC) and Airlines for America² (A4A), we are writing to urge the federal government to work with industry to swiftly lay out a clear plan for the safe restart of transborder air travel, based on the recommendations made in Health Canada's COVID-19 Testing and Screening Expert Advisory Panel report released last week.

We believe a science and data-based approach will provide for the safe restart of transborder air travel. The Panel report, prepared by experts in epidemiology and virology as well as advanced data analytics, calls for a variety of changes to Canadian border and travel policy including elimination of quarantine for fully vaccinated travellers, elimination of hotel quarantine for all travellers, and reduction of quarantine for partially vaccinated and unvaccinated travellers.

As vaccination rates increase exponentially in both countries, and provincial governments release their restart plans, now is the time for the federal government to engage immediately with airlines to deliver a clear roadmap and timeline to reopen the air border. We believe this work should be completed and announced before June 21, when the existing Canadian border measures are set to potentially be renewed.

We commend the success of both the Canadian and U.S. vaccine programs. In Canada, as of June 2, 2021, 59 percent of the population had received at least one dose of the vaccine and 4 percent had been fully vaccinated, with the latter number expected to increase rapidly as the rate of vaccine supply procured by the Canadian government increases. In the U.S.,

¹ NACC's members are Air Canada, Air Transat, Jazz Aviation LP and WestJet.

² A4A's members are Alaska Air Group, Inc.; American Airlines Group, Inc.; Atlas Air Worldwide Holdings, Inc.; Delta Air Lines, Inc.; FedEx Corp.; Hawaiian Airlines; JetBlue Airways Corp.; Southwest Airlines Co.; United Airlines Holdings, Inc.; and United Parcel Service Co. Air Canada is an associate member.

as of June 2, 2021, 51 percent of the population had received at least one dose of the vaccine and 40 percent had been fully vaccinated. On June 2, President Biden announced a National Month of Action to get 70 percent of U.S. adults at least one dose by July 4, 2021.

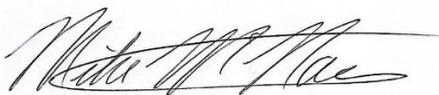
Safely reopening transborder air travel between Canada and the U.S. is essential for both nation's economic recovery from the pandemic. Canada and the U.S. have one of the largest and most comprehensive investment relationships in the world. Air travel is a critical enabler of trade between our countries that was worth \$718 billion USD in 2019, including the transport of 408,000 tons of high value-added freight and mail (1,117 tons per day). In 2019, U.S. foreign direct investment in Canada totalled a record 402 billion USD (nearly 47 percent of total foreign investment in Canada) and Canada's foreign direct investment in the U.S. was 496 billion USD.

Recently, other countries have published their restart strategies and announced the reopening of international markets where safe. The United Kingdom released its recovery plan for aviation and international travel in April and the first stage of opening began on May 17. The European Council is recommending that Member States adjust their travel restrictions to allow fully vaccinated travellers to enter the EU without requiring quarantine, an approach various EU Member States have already adopted. These policy changes are based on science-based analysis provided by government health authorities including the European Centres for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).

We understand that you share our ambition to reopen this vital trade and travel artery between our two countries safely. Considering the above, and given the reopening occurring globally, we ask that you and your team engage immediately with the airline industry to create a plan, drawing on the Panel report, that will clearly spell out how and when we will restart air travel between Canada and the U.S., with the objective of releasing the plan prior to June 21.

We look forward to working with you and your staff to accomplish this key priority.

Sincerely,



Mike McNaney



Nicholas E. Calio

cc: The Honourable Pete Buttigieg, U.S. Secretary of Transportation
The Honourable Xavier Becerra, U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services
Dr. Rochelle Walensky, Director for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
The Honourable Jeffrey Zients, U.S. White House COVID-19 Response Coordinator