

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 30, 2015

The Honorable Jeh Johnson
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Nebraska Avenue Complex
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Johnson,

As you know, Phase II of the Cargo Pre-Inspection pilot at the Peace Bridge crossing in my Western New York district recently concluded after a nearly yearlong trial for commercial traffic, and is currently under evaluation. I have no doubt that in its final determination, the report will conclude what is obvious to Western New Yorkers; pre-inspection should be expanded and made permanent on the Peace Bridge given its unique geographic constraints and high volume of passenger and commercial traffic.

That said, during the pilot, program officials discovered several challenges that need not wait for the conclusion of the evaluation for the federal government to address. For each of these issues I encourage you take immediate remedial action, and to report to me as soon as is possible regarding any challenges that prevent the Department and its sister federal agencies from doing so.

1. The internet speeds on the Canadian side of the bridge exceeded those found on the American side, enabling faster screening.
2. The radiation detectors on the American side were found to be older and more inaccurate, resulting in false negatives that create delays. It is my understanding that local officials are currently addressing this issue; I ask that you work with them toward a successful resolution.
3. Empty trucks are not required to provide a manifest, resulting in unnecessary secondary inspections of these empty vehicles.

The quality and state of the infrastructure and protocols at ports of entry such as the Peace Bridge is a measure of the Department's commitment to the facilitation of trade and travel. I urge you to work expeditiously to address the concerns identified by program officials, as they are vital to the economic health of my community. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Brian Higgins
Member of Congress