

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 14, 2022

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your strong commitment to bolstering America’s continued economic growth and your Administration’s focus on jobs and equity. As members of the House Democratic Congressional Delegation of Texas, we write to express our grave concern with Texas Governor Greg Abbott’s recent deputization of state troopers to conduct inspections of commercial vehicles crossing the U.S.-Mexico border—a state policy that is jeopardizing Congress’ and your Administration’s efforts to strengthen supply chains, support job creation, lower prices at the grocery store, and ensure the efficient flow of commerce through our ports of entry at the Southern Border. We appreciate the Administration’s recent statement criticizing this catastrophic policy and call on you to use a whole-of-government approach to end this harmful politicization of our border that is hurting Texas’s economy and threatening the livelihood of Texan families and businesses, which is a threat to economic growth and development across the country.

As you may know, Governor Abbott announced this order to increase commercial vehicle inspections on April 6th, 2022, as a response to what he has absurdly called “the Biden Administration’s failure to secure our border.”¹ This comes on the heels of a separate move by Governor Abbott to bus recently processed migrants in Texas border communities to Washington, D.C., an effort that is already underway, in response to the Administration’s recent announcement about plans to rescind Title 42. Governor Abbott has also deployed about 10,000 National Guard troops and state troopers to the border—many times involuntarily and under strenuous conditions—as part of Operation Lone Star, the State’s mission to address “illegal migration”. This deployment has not only been a wasteful use of taxpayer money but has also harmed the readiness and well-being of our National Guard. These political stunts are hurting our communities; and today, they are threatening the economic well-being of Americans during times of high global inflation and supply chain shortages that have increased prices on consumers and disrupted normal business operations.

Additional state inspections of commercial traffic are unnecessary and duplicative of what Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents, though the Department of Homeland Security, are already doing to inspect incoming trucks at the border to detect and disrupt potential illegal activity while facilitating legitimate trade. Governor Abbott is blatantly interfering with CBP’s enforcement of immigration laws, as well as federal customs laws, and conducting inspections on vehicles that have already been, according to CBP, “comprehensively inspected and cleared to enter the United States” by the agency.² If allowed to continue, these extensive state inspections will create a massive economic crisis for both Texas and the country—causing billions of dollars in revenue losses for businesses, increasing prices and grocery shortages for consumers, and leading to higher rates of air pollution due to the congestion of idling trucks.

¹ [Governor Abbott Announces Arrival of First Bus Of Unlawful Migrants At U.S. Capitol | Office of the Texas Governor | Greg Abbott](#)

² <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/national-media-release/fact-sheet-commercial-traffic-delays-along-texas-border-and>

Cross-border commerce between the U.S. and Mexico remains a vital economic driver for Texas and the rest of the country—bringing billions of revenue into the U.S annually.^[3] Mexico is Texas’ largest trading partner with \$442 billion of goods exchanged in 2021, \$264 billion of which from imports. According to industry leaders, two-thirds of the fresh produce in Texas comes from Mexico, a lot of which is now sitting—and potentially spoiling—at the checkpoints where trucks are currently sitting for as long as nearly 30 hours.³ The enforcement of these state inspections is hindering the movement of such unpreserved goods like meat products, fruits, and vegetables, as well as medical and manufacturing supplies which are not only essential for the border communities of El Paso, Laredo, Pharr, and Brownsville, but U.S. businesses and industries everywhere. It is also inhumane, as truckers are forced to wait for hours without food, water, or use of restrooms due to the significant increase in wait times. We are asking the Administration to work to address this devastating policy that is posing a direct threat to the growth and stability of our economy and both local and national supply chains.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your commitment to protecting and strengthening the U.S. economy, innovation, and competitiveness. We look forward to your response and continued leadership.

Sincerely,



VERONICA ESCOBAR
Member of Congress



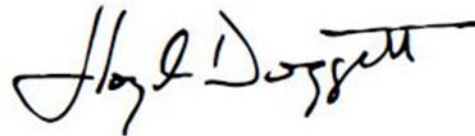
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MEMBER OF CONGRESS



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Member of Congress



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LLOYD DOGGETT
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VICENTE GONZALEZ
Member of Congress

^[3] <https://www.bts.dot.gov/newsroom/north-american-transborder-freight-value-nears-114-billion-january-2022-206-january-2021>

⁴ <https://www.axios.com/truckers-protest-abbott-texas-rules-008bd1ab-41e1-4161-abb4-d421d3ef448c.html>



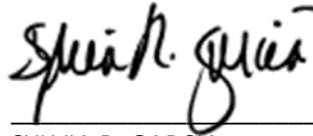
AL GREEN
Member of Congress



LIZZIE FLETCHER
Member of Congress



SHEILA JACKSON LEE
Member of Congress



SYLVIA R. GARCIA
Member of Congress



EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON
Member of Congress

CC:

Secretary Pete Buttigieg, *United States Department of Transportation*
Ambassador Katherine Tai, *Office of the United States Trade Representative*
Ambassador Ken Salazar, *United States Ambassador to Mexico*
Ambassador Esteban Moctezuma Barragán, *Ambassador of Mexico to the United States*
Commissioner Chris Magnus, *U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)*