

October 5, 2023

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Ave., SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Mr. Troy A. Miller
Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Commissioner
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20229

RE: Congestion at Southern Border Presenting Serious Risks to U.S. Auto Industry

Dear Secretary Mayorkas and Mr. Miller:

The undersigned associations, representing the automakers and automotive suppliers that together produce over 95% of the cars and light trucks sold in the United States, write to express our profound concerns with the worsening delays and bottlenecks for commercial traffic at our southern border. These disruptions are an outgrowth of the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) enhanced border security operations along the Rio Grande, which includes the complete closure of the region's main commercial crossing, the Bridge of the Americas (BOTA). To mitigate the damage on our operations and our workers in the United States – which rely upon cross border traffic, including vehicle parts or equipment moving across the border multiple times before final assembly – we strongly urge DHS and CBP to move quickly to expand CBP's processing capacity for commercial cargo at all of the alternate entry points in the region.

In making this request, we want to be clear that each of our associations, as well as our respective member companies, greatly value and appreciate CBP's efforts to ensure the security of our border and the safety of those who attempt to cross it. Moreover, we fully recognize and respect the humanitarian nature and focus of CBP's current operations due to the influx of unsupported migrants from a variety of Latin American countries, which required urgent action.

However, it is our hope that CBP – working closely with its counterparts at the National Customs Agency of Mexico (ANAM) – will act with similar urgency to address the impact those operations are having on our industry and the millions of American jobs we support at assembly plants and parts facilities across the country.

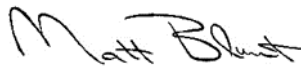
Now in its third week, the closure of BOTA's commercial lanes continues to have a ripple effect on the alternate entry points in the area, where the wait times for our trucks continue to grow. Over the past two weeks, automakers and their supplier partners have taken emergency measures to mitigate the impact of the delays, backups, and disruptions. We have been in close contact with CBP, and we greatly appreciate their assistance and overall efforts; however, the temporary measures taken by our member companies are now buckling under the weight of the continued BOTA closures and the cascading impact on the alternate commercial crossings – crossings that were not built to handle the volume of traffic being diverted from BOTA. In fact, some of our member companies are now cancelling shifts at some of their U.S. facilities, with plantwide disruptions becoming increasingly likely.

Therefore, we urge you to work with CBP's counterparts at ANAM to extend, *to the maximum extent possible*, the hours and days of operation at the alternate BOTA commercial crossings for a sustained period of time. Such measures would involve, at a minimum, having all alternate BOTA crossings in the El Paso and Tucson Sectors operate seven days a week, since many of those commercial entry points are closed on Saturday and Sunday. Our associations are hearing from multiple sources that ANAM officials are willing to take such measures, but thus far neither DHS nor CBP has made a request. Thus, we believe the proposal will find a welcome audience with CBP's counterparts in Mexico.

We thank you in advance for considering our proposal as you carry out CBP's mission and operations along our southern border, and we look forward to your response.



John Bozzella
President & CEO
Alliance for Automotive
Innovation



Matt Blunt
President
American Automakers



Jennifer Safavian
President & CEO
Autos Drive America



Bill Long
President and CEO
MEMA, The Vehicle Suppliers
Association

CC: Monte Hawkins, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Transborder
Emily Mendrala, White House Senior Advisor on Migration
Joelle Gamble, Deputy Director, National Security Council
Shikina Hasham, Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Customs and Border Protection