

February 19, 2021

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A2

Re: Maintaining Border Exemptions for Essential Workers

Dear Prime Minister:

On behalf of the undersigned trade associations, we write to urge you to uphold current exemptions from mandatory quarantine and from testing at the land border for essential workers in order to protect the integrated supply chains that depend on them.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Canada's critical infrastructure sectors have been granted exemptions from mandatory quarantine rules and from testing at the land border for their workers entering Canada from abroad. These exemptions have been pivotal to safely maintaining business operations during the pandemic and to enable the timely, free flow of food, medical supplies, and critical goods across the border.

The recently announced requirement for non-essential travellers to take a COVID-19 test upon arrival and wait three days in a designated hotel for the results, and new, broad testing requirements for land border crossings, are causing concern in industry. While the government has made it clear that this is intended for non-essential travelers, the exemptions detailed to date are limited and do not yet capture all essential workers. Because the critical infrastructure sectors rely on one another, all these sectors must be exempted equally in order to function properly. The disruptions caused by the inability of these workers to move freely and quickly across the border will result in some sectors being forced to cease operations. Furthermore, additional testing requirements at the border for essential workers, especially truckers, risks causing catastrophic delays and threatens the cross-border supply chains for food and important goods.

We therefore request that critical infrastructure worker exemptions from mandatory quarantine and from testing at the land borders be maintained. Moreover, it is imperative that the details of these rules be released as soon as possible to halt this confusion for industry, border officials, and the general public.

We thank you for your consideration of this matter and would like to schedule a meeting with you to discuss these concerns. We will follow up with your office to schedule this meeting.

Sincerely,

Hon. Perrin Beatty, P.C., O.C.
President & CEO
Canadian Chamber of Commerce

Goldy Hyder
President & CEO
Business Council of Canada

Dan Kelly
President & CEO
Canadian Federation of Independent
Business

Diane Brisebois
President & CEO
Retail Council of Canada

Dennis A. Darby, P.Eng., ICD.D
President & CEO
Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters