

GUEST VIEW: A Thriving border benefits US and Canada

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Few international relationships in the world are as deep and mutually beneficial as that between the United States and Canada. Our nations share the longest international border, and our economies benefit immensely from organized cross-border travel and tourism.

Cross border travel generates billions in economic activity and supports hundreds of thousands of jobs on both sides of the border. Disruption to this relationship risks harming the economies, businesses, and citizens of both proud nations.

Canada is the top source of international visitors to the United States, with 20.4 million trips in 2024 alone. These visits generated \$20.5 billion in

spending and supported 140,000 American jobs, according to the U.S. Travel Association. Nowhere is this impact felt more clearly than in Niagara, where 22.5 million people visit both sides of Niagara Falls each year, generating over \$2 billion annually.

A 10% reduction in Canadian travel would mean 2 million fewer visits, \$2.1 billion in lost spending, and 14,000 job losses — impacting businesses of all sizes, from major hotel chains and attractions to tour operators and small-town restaurants — both locally in Niagara and nationwide.

A thriving travel and tourism industry is essential to the strength of U.S.-Canada economic ties. However, the ongoing trade disputes between the United States and Canada pose a significant threat to this relationship which could lead to a decline in travel, affecting not only the tourism sector but the broader economies of both nations.

We appreciate the recent progress being made on the non-tourism related border issues between the U.S. and Canadian governments, and we hope the progress continues over the coming weeks.

As we pivot to the busy travel seasons ahead, the motorcoach, tour, and travel community remains committed to strengthening cross border travel between the United States and Canada.

Group and packaged travel plays a crucial role in bringing people together for school trips, athletic events, business conferences, sightseeing, and tourism — each of which serves as a major economic driver for both nations. Now

more than ever we must advance policies that encourage travel and showcase the best of what we have to offer.

The American Bus Association, International Inbound Travel Association, National Tour Association, Student and Youth Travel Association, United Motorcoach Association and the United States Tour Operators Association are the leading voices in the \$100 billion group travel industry, which collectively employs over 500,000 U.S. workers. These organizations are committed to ensuring a seamless, enjoyable, and enriching experience for travelers of all kinds.

Strong ties between our two countries are integral to letting our industry do what we do best — welcoming and accommodating travelers and tourists and connecting them to unforgettable experiences and memories. By championing organized cross-border travel and tourism, we can strengthen our economies, foster cultural exchange, and continue the proud tradition of hospitality that defines our nations.

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