

**Randel K. Johnson**  
Chair  
US Chamber of Commerce

**Angelo I. Amador**  
Executive Director  
US Chamber of Commerce

**WHIT Task Force**

American Chamber of Commerce  
of Mexico

American Immigration Lawyers  
Association

American Society of Association  
Executives

Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of  
Commerce

Binational Tourism Alliance

Business for Economic Security,  
Tourism and Trade

Canadian/American Border Trade  
Alliance

Canadian American Business  
Council

Canadian Association of Importers  
and Exporters

Canadian Trucking Alliance

Coalition for Employment Through  
Exports

Detroit Regional Chamber

International Association of  
Amusement Parks and Attractions

International Association of  
Exhibitions and Events

Marriott International, Inc.

Mid-Atlantic Hispanic Chamber of  
Commerce

NAFSA: Association of  
International Educators

National Foreign Trade Council

National Restaurant Association

National Tour Association

Pacific Corridor Enterprise Council

Plattsburgh-North Country  
Chamber of Commerce

Quebec-New York Corridor  
Coalition

Travel Business Roundtable

Travel Industry Association

Victoria San Juan Cruises

Visit Canada

Washington International Education  
Council



January 29, 2008

Mr. W. Ralph Basham  
Commissioner  
U.S. Customs and Border Protection  
Department of Homeland Security  
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20229

Dear Commissioner Basham:

The Americans for Better Borders coalition (ABB) unites business organizations and a wide array of companies working to ensure the efficient flow of tourism and goods across our borders, while addressing national security concerns.

The ABB is writing today to reiterate the need for rational and measured implementation of new border crossing requirements. As of January 31, 2008, Customs and Border Protection agents plan to require anyone crossing at a U.S. land or sea port-of-entry to present, in addition to a government issued photo identification, a document to prove citizenship, such as a birth certificate.

The President and Congress agree that securing our nation's borders is something that needs to be done correctly—rather than expeditiously—to avoid unnecessarily harming our economy. On January 4, 2008, President George W. Bush signed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008 (HR 2764), where Congress provided the Administration until June 1, 2009, to develop alternatives to a passport for use in land and sea ports-of-entry. Great progress has already been made in developing enhanced driver's licenses (EDLs) to be acceptable at land and sea ports-of-entry. Furthermore, this spring, the Department of Homeland Security, together with the Department of State, plans to unveil a federally issued low-cost alternative to a U.S. passport, the People Access Security Services (PASS) Card.

The extension granted to the Administration by Congress acknowledges that to be successful, with minimum economic disruption, all these initiatives require an aggressive campaign to educate the general public. The Department of Homeland Security has not taken the necessary steps to educate the general public of this substantial change in border procedures.

Most Americans are unaware that this change is set to take place and further border delays are of grave concern to the business community.

Thus, we request CBP to continue asking for reliable government issued photo identifications as proof of identity. **However, we also call on CBP to continue to allow for oral declarations as proof of citizenship, until an aggressive public relations campaign is completed and more reliable alternatives to birth certificates—such as EDLs and the PASS Card—are in use.** In addition, creating an interim standard that would change in 18 months would further confuse the travelling public and complicate implementation of the final proof of citizenship standards.

As always, we look forward to our continued dialogue to “ensure that the overall economic security of the United States is not diminished by efforts, activities, and programs aimed at securing the homeland.”<sup>1</sup>

Sincerely,



Randel K. Johnson



Angelo I. Amador

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<sup>1</sup> P.L. 107–296, Section 101(b)(1)(F).