

United States Senate

September 8, 2016

The Honorable Jeh Johnson
Secretary of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Johnson:

As travel and economic ties between Canada and Mexico continue to grow, I write regarding the updated visa requirements between Canada and Mexico that will take effect on December 1, 2016. While this policy was enacted for the economic benefit of our neighbors to the north and south, I write to inquire about the policy's national security implications for the United States and whether the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is prepared to face new challenges along our northern border.

Earlier this summer, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced a new policy related to Mexican travelers to Canada. Specifically, as of December 1, 2016, Mexican travelers to Canada will now only have to fill out an Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA) – which is linked to the traveler's passport – and pay a nominal fee (CAD\$7) prior to entry into Canada. Thereafter, these visitors will be allowed a six-month stay from the day they enter, unless otherwise authorized by the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA).

As you know, Montana shares more than 500 miles of international border with Canada. While Border Patrol and CBP do an admirable job of securing our borders, manpower and technology coverage of the entire border with Canada is not complete. Despite our close and cooperative relationship with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and CBSA, gaps in coverage across our northern border present a tremendous vulnerability to our national security.

This new policy closely resembles the U.S. Visa Waiver Program – a program that has also been subject to key vulnerabilities. I am proud to have been a part of the bipartisan group that led an effort to reduce the general level of risk of the program, but there is still work to do. It is in that context that I raise my concerns that this new Canadian policy could leave open an unforeseen weakness in U.S.-Canadian border protection. International traffickers of drugs, humans, and goods will continue to test our nation at its perceived weakest points, and we must do our best to prepare ourselves against such vulnerabilities.

Therefore, I request information about the following efforts DHS is undertaking to ensure our northern border remains secure in light of this new policy:

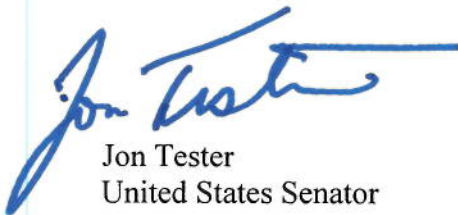
1. Montana's border with Canada is a vast area to protect and technology plays a critical role in expanding the capabilities and mission of Border Patrol and Air and Marine Operations. What efforts are DHS and its components undertaking to expand the

deployment of detection and interdiction technology among particularly rural and remote areas along our northern border, such as Montana?

2. What U.S. national security challenges does DHS see arising from this new Canadian policy?
3. Will this new policy affect DHS component staff levels across the northern border? If so, please describe new staffing plans for the northern border.
4. What efforts has DHS undertaken, in collaboration with Canadian law enforcement, to ensure that this Canadian policy will have minimal impact on the national security of the United States and Canada?
5. Does DHS plan to request additional funding for FY2018 as a result of this new Canadian policy? If so, for how much?
6. Are additional statutory authorizations required to permit DHS to better conduct its mission along the northern border?

The United States and Canada have long been trusted partners in bolstering each other's national security. DHS cooperation with our Canadian allies is critical to securing our northern border and only through joint law enforcement, intelligence, and defense operations can we continue our good work together to keep our nations safe. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Jon Tester
United States Senator