



Transportation and Trade Corridor Alliance

Arizona Department of Transportation • Arizona-Mexico Commission
Arizona Commerce Authority • Arizona Office of Tourism

Arizona Border Staffing Summit with U.S. Congress

On May 11, U.S. Senator Jeff Flake's office along with the Douglas International Port Authority, Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority, and Greater Yuma Port Authority in partnership with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), the Arizona-Mexico Commission (AMC), and the Transportation and Trade Corridor Alliance (TTCA), hosted a briefing in Washington, D.C. to express the urgency for additional staffing for our ports of entry.

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) confirmed that 21.6% of the positions of the Tucson Sector Field Office are vacant. That is close to 1/4 of all positions at our ports of entry. This translates to approximately 240 vacancies at our ports of entry. Filling the current vacancies would bring our ports to entry to the staffing levels that are required today but it does not necessarily mean that this would meet the anticipated future growth at our ports of entry.

In 2015, Arizona's ports of entry processed close to 390,000 trucks, 801 trains, 59,000 buses, 8.9 million cars, 6.7 million pedestrians, and a total of 23.8 million people. The trade volumes represent more than \$30 billion in imports and exports through Arizona's ports of entry. When you consider that Mexican visitors spend over \$7.3 million per day throughout Arizona, the importance of our ports of entry simply cannot be overstated. And all the trends indicate that the growth at our ports of entry will continue.

In 2014, the U.S. Congress approved 2,000 additional positions for CBP. Since then, CBP

has only been able to fill 1,100 of those positions and 900 remain funded but unfilled. From the Arizona perspective, a number of stakeholders are prepared to assist CBP in identifying prospective recruits for these positions. The participation of Arizona's congressional delegation is critical as some of the solutions may require Congressional intervention. We are very grateful to have Senators Flake and McCain as champions for this issue.

CBP has taken a number of steps to help address the situation. For instance, they now offer a 25% of pay for up to three years for officers that take a position at an Arizona port of entry. Additionally, CBP offers a number of programs to help employees pay off student loans. CBP recognizes the situation at Arizona's ports of entry but they face similar challenges in many other border locations. In fact, they have identified 12 ports of entry as priority locations for recruiting at a national level and Arizona's four principle ports (Douglas, Nogales, Lukeville and San Luis) are part of those 12.

There are also several challenges with the recruiting process that require review and attention including the very challenging polygraph testing that recruits are subjected to, the remote location of some of the ports of entry, and competition from other enforcement agencies for those recruits. We are grateful to CBP for their efforts to improve the situation and we greatly acknowledge the efforts of the folks on the ground that make every effort to do the best that they can with what they have.

TTCA, the border communities and a number of local and regional stakeholders remain committed to working with CBP to find long-term solutions to this critical matter.

Letters Regarding the Urgent Need for Staffing at Arizona's International Ports of Entry

- [Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority Letter Sent to Secretary Johnson](#)
 - [Customs and Border Protection Response Letter to Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority](#)
 - [Mayor Jonathan Rothschild Letter in Support of Increased Staffing at Arizona's](#)
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International Ports of Entry



U.S. Senators Jeff Flake and John McCain leading a discussion with Customs and Border Protection on staffing for Arizona's international ports of entry. Among the stakeholders present were the cities of Douglas, Nogales, San Luis; the Port Authorities of Yuma and Nogales; John S. Halikowski, Director of the Arizona Department of Transportation and Co-Chair of the Transportation and Trade Corridor Alliance; and the vast majority of our congressional offices represented through their legislative staff.



Photo #1 (left to right): Chairman Rudy Molera, Board of Supervisors, Santa Cruz County; Todd Owen, Assistant Commissioner, Customs and Border Protection; Jim Kolbe, Former Congressman and Co-Chair of

the Transportation and Trade Corridor Alliance; Will Brooks, Director of Field Operations, Customs and Border Protection; John S. Halikowski, Director, Arizona Department of Transportation and Co-Chair of the Transportation and Trade Corridor Alliance; Chairman Guillermo Valencia, Board of Directors, Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority; Matias Rosales, Vice Mayor, City of San Luis.

Photo #2 (left to right): Lance Jungmeyer, President, Fresh Produce Association of the Americas; Bruce Bracker, Treasurer, Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority; Chandler Morse, Chief of Staff, Office of U.S. Senator Jeff Flake; Chairman Guillermo Valencia, Board of Directors, Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority.



Border communities and the Arizona Department of Transportation updating the Embassy of Mexico (left) and the U.S. Department of State (right) on a number of border projects and cross-border initiatives.

Photo #1 (left to right): Chairman Guillermo Valencia, Board of Directors, Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority; Bruce Bracker, Treasurer, Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority; Gail Lewis, Director, Office of P3 Initiatives and International Affairs; John S. Halikowski, Director, Arizona Department of Transportation and Co-Chair of the Transportation and Trade Corridor Alliance; Carolina Ayala, Head of Section and Border Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Mexico; Kenneth Smith Ramos, Head of the Trade and NAFTA Office, Ministry of the Economy in Mexico (Secretaria de Economia); Matias Rosales, Vice Mayor, City of San Luis; Chairman Rudy Molera, Board of Supervisors, Santa Cruz County; and not present in the photo, the Ministry of the Treasury in Mexico (Secretaria de Hacienda) and the Ministry of Agriculture in Mexico (SAGHARPA).

Photo #2 (left to right): John S. Halikowski, Director, Arizona Department of Transportation and Co-Chair of the

Transportation and Trade Corridor Alliance; Chairman Rudy Molera, Board of Supervisors, Santa Cruz County; Lance Jungmeyer, President, Fresh Produce Association of the Americas; Gail Lewis, Director, Office of P3 Initiatives and International Affairs; Linda Nielan, Foreign Service Officer, U.S. Department of State; Karin Sullivan, Senior Advisor, U.S. Department of State; Matias Rosales, Vice Mayor, City of San Luis; Chairman Guillermo Valencia, Board of Directors, Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority; Bruce Bracker, Treasurer, Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority.

Articles of Interest

[United States Tops A.T. Kearney FDI Confidence Index for 4th Year](#)

[ADOT Pursues Federal Grants to Advance Highway Improvements](#)

[Congressional Delegation Letter of Support for the Critical Improvements to State Route 189 in the Border Community of Nogales, Arizona](#)

[Town Hall: Better Roads Would Strengthen Trade with Mexico](#)

[International Leaders Learning More About Arizona's Economy](#)

[Las Vegas Poised for China flights, Phoenix Keeps Working Toward More International Routes](#)

[Getting North America Right](#)

[East Coast Ports to See Muted Boost From Panama Canal Expansion](#)

[MAG Board Endorses Plan to Smooth Out Truck Traffic at the Arizona-Mexico Border](#)

[Caterpillar Expands Presence In Southern Arizona](#)

[Arizona Tourism Indicators At-A-Glance](#)

[A New Map for America](#)

[Arizona Office of Tourism Promotes Arizona to Chinese Trade and Media Industry](#)

TTCA Events

[May 19, 2016 | TTCA Steering Committee Meeting | 1:30-3:30 PM](#)

Location: Maricopa Association of Governments, 302 N. 1st Ave., 2nd Floor Saguro Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ 85003

Collaborator Events

[May 19, 2016 | Doing Business in Africa: Why U.S. Businesses Should Not Overlook This Land of Opportunity | 12:00-2:00 PM](#)

Location: Maricopa Association of Governments, 302 N. 1st Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85003

Note: Overlaps with TTCA Steering Committee meeting but is being held in the same location, MAG.

[May 20, 2016 | Increasing Exports Via Supply Chains With Mexico: How to Access Mexico's Maquiladora Manufacturing Market | 8:00-11:30 AM](#)

Location: Arizona Small Business Association, 4600 E. Washington St., Ste. 341, Phoenix, AZ 85034

[May 25, 2016 | International Economic Development Council Webinar | 2:30-4:30 PM EST](#)

Location: Please contact webinar@iedconline.org for instructions on how to join this webinar



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