



2016 Policy Agenda



BTA | **Border**TM
Trade
Alliance

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Dear Friends,

The Border Trade Alliance in 2016 celebrates its 30th year of advocating for North American borders that are properly equipped to facilitate trade and travel and that contribute to the NAFTA region's economic competitiveness and prosperity.

Our three decades of work have been marked by numerous policy victories that have helped streamline inspection procedures at our ports, loosened bottlenecks and congestion, modernized infrastructure and have ultimately grown trade volumes.

In 2016 we will continue to advocate for a well-resourced Customs and Border Protection, the elimination of redundant inspections at the land border ports of entry, and federal and state transportation policies designed to increase freight mobility and decrease shipping times.

On behalf of the BTA's board of directors, we invite you to review our policy positions that our public and private sector members have adopted. You will find an organization committed to the belief that our borders are integral components to North America's ability to compete in the global economy.



RUSS JONES
Chairman of the Board



NOE GARCIA, III
President

Transportation and Infrastructure Committee



Chairman: Pete Sepulveda
County Judge
Cameron County, Texas

Committee Scope

The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee is responsible for developing the BTA's positions on issues regarding mobility, infrastructure and cross-border trucking and rail policy. The committee also assesses policies affecting the presidential permitting process and promotes efforts to increase private sector and local community participation in the development of border infrastructure.

The Committee supports policies that improve transportation efficiency and that are aimed at developing infrastructure that is reflective of today's cross-border trade volumes.

2016 Goals

Supporting a long-term, pro-trade transportation plan

Ensuring a pro-trade, pro-border federal transportation plan

In 2015, the BTA was successful by including Coordinated Border Infrastructure (CBI) flexibility language in the FAST Act, the federal transportation reauthorization bill. The CBI Flex language allows governors of a border state to transfer up to five percent of that state's total federal allotment for projects under CBI-eligible projects as outlined by the SAFETEA-LU criteria. The BTA in 2016 will focus its advocacy efforts to ensure that border governors make sufficient transfers utilizing the flexibility in the legislation for border infrastructure projects.

Freight mobility

The U.S. Department of Transportation is actively engaged in a national freight plan, as directed by Congress. One charge at a federal level is to help state-level freight advisory committees in the implementation of state freight plans as outlined in MAP-21. With the passage of FAST Act, a formula fund for states and local governments to plan and fund their freight mobility projects was created and called the National Highway Freight Program. The BTA will continue to advocate with border state DOTs to ensure that border infrastructure remains a high priority.

Improving border infrastructure

Unleashing the power of the private sector and border communities through public-private partnerships

The BTA will continue to work with

- Photos taken by Gerald L. Nino,
- Chad Gerber and James R. Tourtellotte
- from CBP.gov

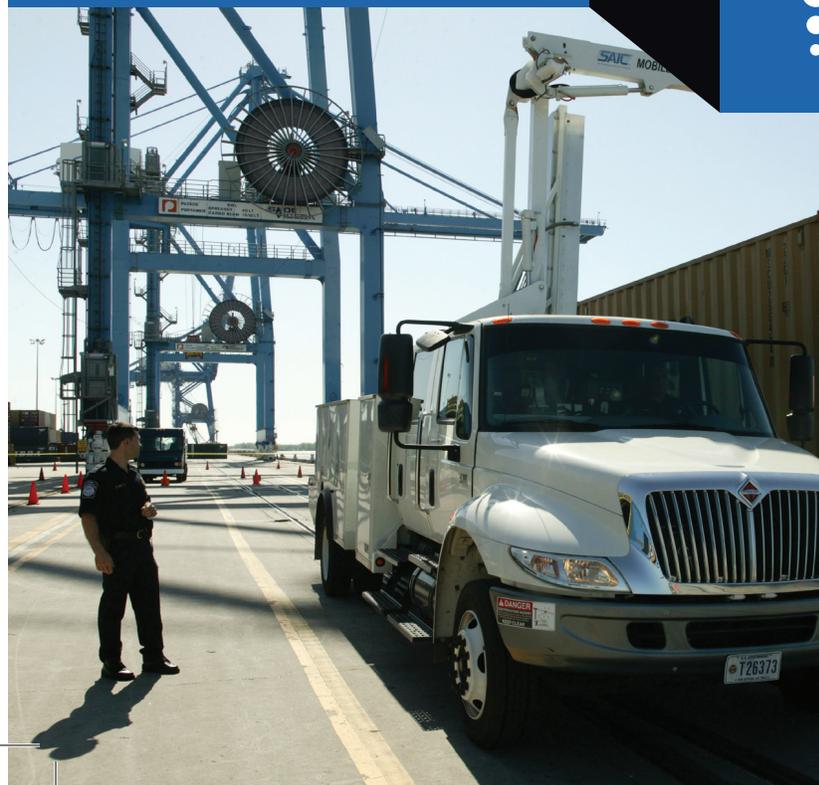
BTA Security and Trade Committee



Chairman: Miguel Perez
EP Logistics
El Paso, Texas

Committee Scope

The Security and Trade Committee oversees policies and procedures at the land border ports of entry, promoting policies that encourage and promote legitimate trade and travel while ensuring that border agencies – specifically Customs and



Congress, Customs and Border Protection and the General Services Administration to ensure smooth implementation of an initiative to allow private sector dollars or available state, county or local dollars to be used to fund border infrastructure and land border port of entry projects or supplement federal appropriations.

The BTA will also seek ways to fund additional staffing beyond those positions already congressionally appropriated.

Nothing in BTA's advocacy for public-private or public-public partnerships is intended implicitly or explicitly to call for: the establishment of tolls where they do not currently exist; the increasing of current tolls; or increased user fees imposed by the federal government. BTA's work in this area is merely intended to give border communities more available options to partner with the federal government to improve their port facilities.

Improving the permitting process

The BTA will also advocate intra-agency coordination between the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. State Department to develop actionable means of dealing with the unique challenges of permitting and approving border-oriented projects. Through its international outreach, BTA will also advocate inter-governmental coordination between the United States, Mexico and Canada necessary to improve NAFTA trade flows between our nations.

The importance of a multi-modal freight strategy

BTA recognizes freight rail has a critical role in moving international goods to and from our borders. We were proud to have supported the construction of the West Rail Bridge in Cameron County, Texas, which finally opened in 2015, and was the first new rail port of entry to open in over 100 years. Freight rail can move a ton of freight 500 miles on a single gallon of fuel. Each train removes 300+ trucks from increasingly congested border bridges and access highways. Rail points of entry are also efficient use of CBP resources used to monitor goods crossing our international borders.

The BTA recognizes that a multi-modal approach to freight transportation can help solve critical international infrastructure congestion with faster project delivery and lower costs to both shippers and governmental entities. BTA advocates that no mode – trucking, rail, maritime or aviation - is unfairly disadvantaged by border infrastructure, access, or allocation of CBP resources.

The development of new infrastructure financing options, such as increased capitalization for the North American Development Bank and even a national infrastructure bank

The BTA supports the development of new methods for facilitating the long-term planning and financing of large infrastructure projects. Such new methods could leverage public and private-sector dollars to help seed large projects, particularly those that span geographic regions.

The Presidents of the United States and Mexico are seeking to recapitalize the North American Development Bank (NADBank) to assist in the financing of environmental border infrastructure projects including ports of entry. The BTA fully supports the capitalization efforts that would allow the NADBank to fund more border infrastructure projects.

Ensuring safe cross-border trucking

Consistently applied, border-wide safety inspection regime

Cross-border trucking should be conducted in a safe environment. Shippers should choose ports based on the efficient movement of freight; truck safety inspections should not be a determining factor in which port a shipper chooses. Truck safety inspections should be applied consistently from port to port and not provide one port of entry a competitive advantage over another.

Supporting full implementation of NAFTA's trucking articles

Consistent with the organization's longstanding historic support of NAFTA, the BTA will continue its commitment to support full implementation of NAFTA's trucking articles and will stand opposed to efforts by certain interests to thwart a competitive trucking market.

The Border Trade Alliance

North America's premier authority on issues affecting the U.S. northern and southern borders, representing a large grassroots network of over 4.2 million public and private sector representatives.

Border Protection – have the tools necessary to carry out their important enforcement mission. The Committee also interacts with other North American custom agencies, the Canadian Border Services Agency and Mexican Aduanas.

The Committee has a C-TPAT Subcommittee, which is charged with monitoring and making recommendations for improving the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism and other trusted shipper programs in an ongoing effort to ensure that the programs are delivering benefits to its members that are

commensurate with the expense necessary to remain in the programs.

2016 Goals Innovative Trade Processing Solutions

Trade-friendly public-private partnerships – The BTA has played a leading role in advancing the concept of public-private partnerships between the federal government and border stakeholders to increase staffing resources and improve aging infrastructure. The BTA will continue to support the concept, as is

encouraged by the launch of pilot program reimbursable fee agreements in El Paso and the Rio Grande Valley.

Any P3 agreements and/or legislation must be trade friendly, however. The BTA's support for the P3 concept is not intended to imply support for passing any hikes in bridge tolls or other fees along to industry. More to the point, we believe free bridges should remain free. But the BTA supports reimbursable fee agreement pilots where there are clear, measurable improvement goals in staffing and infrastructure, and we

will assess the pilots during their operation and at their conclusion accordingly.

Cargo pre-processing/pre-clearance

The security needs of the U.S. and our neighbors are better served when our borders are our last line of defense, not our first. To that end, the committee supports the joint demonstration project between CBP and the Canadian Border Services Agency at the U.S.-Canada border allowing U.S. CBP personnel to pre-process U.S.-bound shipments in Canada before the shipments reach the U.S. border. BTA will look to replicate the concept at other border ports.

The BTA also supports a pre-clearance program involving C-TPAT and FAST-approved shipments of computers manufactured in the FOXCONN facility in San Jeronimo. Under this program, a primary inspection booth is located on the manufacturer's campus or other secure location; if the shipment is cleared, it can proceed directly through a specially designated lane at the Santa Teresa port of entry. Any shipments requiring additional inspections will be processed at the port of entry. The BTA also supports similar programs where appropriate, such as an agricultural products pre-clearance program at the Otay Mesa Port of Entry.

Our support extends to a program underway in Laredo, Texas that allows Mexican Aduanas to pre-clear cargo in the U.S. bound for Mexico.

Improving trade efficiencies

Implement consistent metrics for border wait times – As indicated in the July 2013 GAO study, develop a consistent and standardized measurement process for border wait times. Measurements should be compared to wait time goals and results should be made available to the trade community.

Support CBP Centers of Excellence and Expertise

– CBP's Centers of Excellence and Expertise represent a concerted effort by the agency to promote uniformity in import processes for specific industries in an effort to deliver greater consistency and harmonization. The BTA will support CBP and encourage industry support for the Centers and is encouraged by the Centers' inclusion in the Customs authorization bill adopted in February.

Promote Free Trade Agreement Harmonization

– The BTA will work within the NAFTA framework to promote free trade and tariff removal in those cases where a bilateral trade agreement does not align with NAFTA, and thus results in the unnecessary application of tariffs.

Ensuring Mexican and U.S. holidays don't result in shipping delays

– Local port leadership for U.S. CBP and Mexican Aduanas should work together and with the trade community to align port operating schedules as best as possible to prevent shipping delays during holidays.

Advocate for necessary resources for

agribusiness trade – U.S. ports of entry continue to struggle with obtaining adequate resources to process efficiently and securely U.S.-bound agricultural products. The BTA will advocate for an increased effort by CBP and USDA to train and deploy a sufficient number of CBP Agriculture Specialists and ensure they have the proper training as well as advocate for increased specialty functions such as entomologists for identification of invasive pests.

The BTA has also observed inconsistent processing from port to port of NARP-qualified products. NARP, the National Agriculture Release Program, is intended to provide a methodology for evaluating high-volume agriculture imports that are low-risk for the introduction of plant pests and plant diseases into the United States.

Promoting Cross-Border Travel

Alleviating border delays for pedestrians, private vehicles – Many border communities depend on the ability of pedestrians and private vehicles (POVs) to easily cross from Mexico into the U.S. to patronize local stores, restaurants and other attractions as an integral part of their city's economic health. As part of our commitment to efficient yet secure cross-border travel, BTA will, in cooperation with a member of Congress, request from GAO a study as a basis for understanding what is leading to increased reports of growing pedestrian and POV delays at the ports of entry and identify what policy changes can be implemented to alleviate those delays and prepare land border ports of entry for an economic recovery that will likely place increased demands on the ports.

Strengthening trusted traveler programs – The BTA will work with GAO investigators and Mexico to assist agencies in both countries of reviews of the effectiveness and efficiencies of trusted traveler programs such as NEXUS, SENTRI and Viajero Confiable.

Strengthening Trusted Shipper Programs: C-TPAT, PIP and NEEC

Making trusted shipper programs more attractive to business:

- Expanded hours of service where appropriate for C-TPAT traffic at ports of entry;
- Continue to pursue additional benefits, such as automatic in-bond release and Tier 3 for cross-border carriers.
- Encourage CBP to conduct C-TPAT validations of carriers in northern Mexico beyond Monterrey and Cd. Juárez or develop a remote validation process so that more carriers can be certified to join FAST.
- Evaluate the impact of NEEC's inclusion of the Customs procedural requirement. Most Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) systems have a regulatory compliance component as part of the requirements. In the U.S., the regulatory compliance component is included as a part of ISA, which is considered to be separate from C-TPAT.
- Work with Aduanas to ensure that the NEEC

program is more business-friendly and adopts reforms to make the program more attractive to the cross-border trade community.

- o Work with NEEC users and stakeholders to gather recommendations for improving the program.
- Encourage use of VUCEM and Single Window data as single data sets that can be used for entry and exit from the respective countries. Coordinate the data elements so that a single set of data, generated either through Mexico's VUCEM or U.S. Single Window, can be used for both the export and the import filings.

Public Policy Committee



Chairman: Sam F. Vale
Starr-Camargo Bridge Co.
Rio Grande City, Texas

Committee Scope

The Public Policy Committee Serves as the main advocacy arm of the Border Trade Alliance, representing the organization's policy committees' priority issue positions before lawmakers and agencies.

2016 Goals

In 2016 the committee will continue to coordinate the BTA's interaction with decision-makers as we work to encourage border state governors to allocate transportation dollars to border infrastructure projects; ensure sufficient agricultural inspection resources at ports of entry; and continue the expansion of public-private partnerships to increase staffing levels at the ports and to improve infrastructure.

The committee in 2016 will also take the lead on working with inspection agencies, namely Customs and Border Protection, to investigate the development of a protocol for industry to share trade volume projections with border agencies in order to help ensure that the agencies are properly resourced to efficiently process future trade flows. The protocol will emphasize data security and anonymity to ensure that company data is not made public or used for any other reason except for agency resource allocation planning purposes.

Border Banking Task Force

The BTA in 2016 has established a Border Banking Task Force charged with seeking solutions to the spate of bank branch and account closures in the US-Mexico border region.

The large number of closures has resulted in fewer banking options for border region business and their customers, which harms the economic climate of the region.

The BTA in 2015 offered its insight into cross-border affairs as a trusted source for regulators and Congress on the issue of border banking. Our task force will examine options for developing bank regulations that can be crafted to ensure that US accounts are not used for illegal transactions, while encouraging a thriving banking market throughout the border region.

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