



September 7, 2011

The Honorable Alan Bersin
 Commissioner, US Customs and Border Protection
 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
 Washington, DC 20229

Re: The Implications of Processing Delays at LAX

Dear Commissioner Bersin:

On behalf of the Los Angeles County business community—one of the largest economically vital regions in our Nation we are writing to express our significant disappointment with the lack of sufficient Customs and Border Protection (CBP) processing staff at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). The processing delays experienced by foreign visitors is not just an “L.A. issue,” but has regional, state and national implications as LAX is the largest origin destination airport in the United States and America’s #1 gateway to Asia.

LAX is the largest first point of entry for Asians interested in doing business with America. In times of economic crisis, we need to be doing everything possible to welcome those to our country who are looking to invest—either in starting, expanding or partnering in business, or by bringing tourism dollars to our shores.

It is not an inviting experience to take a 15 hour flight to America and then have to sit on an airplane for over 30 minutes followed by long lines in the terminal because CBP does not have enough agents to process passports at America’s most vital gateway airport. The third world type delays that visitors experience at LAX reflects poorly on the whole nation.

The economic imperative of foreign tourism in Los Angeles is astounding—especially given our current economic conditions. But even more important are the lasting businesses—and jobs—these travelers create

through direct foreign investment that ripples through our region and reverberates throughout the country. According to the last inventory of such businesses taken by the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) there were over 4,500 foreign owned and affiliated businesses in LA County generating a total of 359,000 total jobs. As America's #1 Customs District with \$347 billion in two way trade values, this economic generation benefits Americans far beyond our region alone.

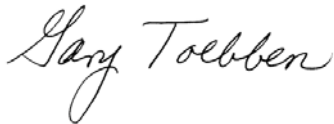
LA County ranks among the world's largest economies. In fact, according to the LAEDC, LA County had the 20th largest economy in the world as of 2010 estimates (measured in nominal GDP and based on official exchange rates). LA County's GDP is larger than Belgium, Sweden, Poland, Saudi Arabia and many others. We require the support of the federal government to do its part to facilitate foreign travel through LAX to help keep much needed foreign investment and tourism moving.

LAX is currently doing its part by investing \$2.3 billion in a new, environmentally sustainable and modern international terminal with accompanying infrastructure to welcome visitors to America. This new terminal will increase CBP processing booths from 60 to a total of 81. The irony is not just the investment being made by LAX, but that CBP doesn't fully staff all the booths currently available today.

We respectfully request an opportunity to meet with you. We will come to Washington, DC to underscore the urgency of our request. We are looking to you to help resolve this issue that impacts visitors to LAX who then go onto other destinations in America spending and investing their money for the benefit of our entire national economy.

We will be following up on our request for a meeting shortly and look forward to continuing this dialogue with you in person.

Sincerely,



Gary Toebben, President & CEO
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce



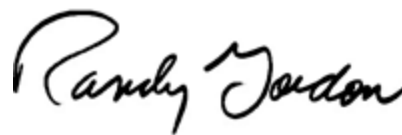
Bill Allen, President & CEO
Los Angeles County Economic
Development Corporation



Vance Baugham, President
World Trade Center Association Los Angeles
Long Beach



Thomas Flinthoft, Immediate Past Chair
LAX Coastal Area Chamber of Commerce



Randy Gordon, President & CEO
Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce



Kim-Yen Huynh, Founder/President
Asian American Business Women Association



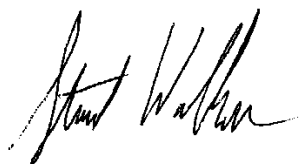
Hugo W. Merida, Chairman of the Board
Los Angeles Metropolitan Hispanic
Chambers of Commerce



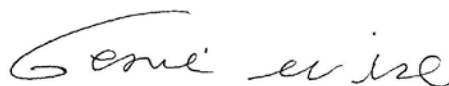
Tracy Rafter, CEO
BizFed, Los Angeles County Business Federation



Carol Schatz, President & CEO
Central City Association of Los Angeles



Stuart Waldman, President
Valley Industry and Commerce Association



Genie Wise, Board Member
Harbor City/Harbor Gateway Chamber of
Commerce



Mark Wilbur, President and CEO
Employers Group