

Leaders comment on crossborder restrictions

With action expected by Canadian government to lift COVID border restrictions, Higgins calls on US to reciprocate; wants both countries to return to prepandemic border management

Congressman Brian Higgins, co-chair of the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group and the Congressional Northern Border Caucus, is calling on the U.S. to end COVID-19-related restrictions at the U.S. border with Canada. Higgins, who has long called for a return to prepandemic border management, is making a new push for U.S. action following multiple published reports citing sources within the Canadian government who are saying Canada will not extend border restrictions set to expire on Sept. 30.

In a letter to the Department of Homeland Security secretary, Higgins wrote, "The time is long overdue for the United States to cease its own COVID-19-related restrictions on our northern border."

Higgins points out that, while the U.S. policy is to require coronavirus vaccination to cross the border, the standard is not routinely enforced.

"In reality, CBP officers are not requesting that Canadians

provide their proof of vaccination unless a vehicle is diverted to secondary inspection for some other, unrelated reason," he wrote. "This obvious contradiction between policy and practice underscores fact that the policy is accomplishing no public health or border security goals while it imposes an unnecessary burden on the economies of northern border communities and an unnecessary hardship on northern border families."

Pandemic-related border restrictions imposed by the U.S. and Canadian governments beginning with a near-complete border shutdown started in March of 2020 and have changed multiple times since then. Most recently, people crossing the land border into Canada are required to be vaccinated, be subject to random coronavirus testing, and enter information into the ArriveCAN app within 72 hours of travel. The U.S. currently requires people entering the country via a land port to be able to provide proof of vaccination, if called upon.

Higgins noted the harm continued restrictions are having on communities: "As economic actors, when the travelling public is faced with increased uncertainty at the border, they respond by avoiding cross-border travel. This avoidance has a very tangible negative economic impact in Buffalo and Niagara Falls, NY, and in other communities on both sides of the border from coast to coast. Again, the time is long overdue for the U.S. to cease all COVID-19-related restrictions on our northern border to allow cross-border travel and its associated economic benefits to return to pre-pandemic levels."

Just last week, members of Parliament visited Washington, D.C., for meetings of the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group. Higgins and the other chairs released a statement calling for ArriveCAN to no longer be a requirement.

Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt said, "I'm encouraged by recent reports that indicate the additional COVID-imposed

travel requirements at the Canadian border may soon be lifted. For months, I have been calling for and to end the confusing and burdensome requirements, including the use of the unreliable ArriveCan app.

"Travel to and from Canada has been restricted for more than two years, and it has not only been an inconvenience for many Western New York families, but it has been economically devastating for our border communities.

"Our economy in Western New York is directly correlated with our strong relationship with our northern neighbors, and it is well past time to remove the border restrictions placed by the Canadian government that have crippled our economy and stifled the free flow of people and goods between our communities.

"I want to thank all the representatives at all levels of government who are working together on a long-overdue resolution to this issue."

Town of Niagara (cont.)

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Wallace said he wishes Suitor well, but that "It's probably good to start fresh."

But Guiliani's appointment to the provisional post, good for a maximum period of nine months, is only one part of the police department's news. Other changes became official Wednesday, as well.

Wallace said the department is shorthanded, with multiple resignations in the past few months. Several months in a row have featured tabled agenda items calling for both part-time and full-time officer hires, meant to help close the gap in the force.

One of those positions was filled Wednesday, with the board approving a part-time officer hire. But they also accepted the resignation of a part-time officer.

The board did approve a request to post for civil service examination, per the town's contract with the police department, for a second part-time officer. But that won't be filled for months as the process begins.

"We're a little short-handed," Wallace said. "The procedures make it difficult to say, 'We'll hire you tomorrow.' Also, the changing of the chief has been a lot to digest. Do I think we're being a little short-minded? Yes. Do I think we can cope with where we're at? Also yes."

In other town news, the council:

- ✓ Approved spending up to \$20,000 from the water department's share of the American Rescue Act funds to purchase new water meters, a reading system and accompanying software.

- ✓ Withdrew \$1.35 million from the Host Community Standing Committee bank account for use toward projects outlined in the park improvement plan. The account's new balance is roughly \$1.1 million following the transaction, the town said.

- ✓ Recognized the 100-year history of Cooper Sign in the town, presenting the owners of the business with an engraved glass sculpture honoring the time. Cooper Sign started in the LaSalle neighborhood, then part of the town, according to Councilman Marc Carpenter.

National Child Passenger Safety Week: 46% of car seats are used incorrectly

By AAA of Western and Central New York

Car crashes are the leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 13, and child traffic fatalities increased by 3% from 2019 (1,064) to 2020 (1,093), according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

However, the percentage of injuries have decreased - NHTSA reports an estimated 139,042 children were injured in traffic crashes in 2020, a 24% decrease from 183,166 in 2019. Amid National Child Passenger Safety Week (Sept. 18-24), AAA Western and Central New York is sharing tips for parents and caregivers in the U.S. about car seat installation and use.

According to NHTSA, 46% of car seats and booster seats are used incorrectly, while the National Digital Car Seat Check Form (NDCF) database reveals that more than half of all car seats brought in for inspection to child passenger safety technicians are improperly installed and used.

Data from the NDCF database also revealed:

- ✓ There are three common mistakes. These include (1) having the car seat installation be too loose, (2) failing to use the tether

when installing a forward-facing car seat with either the lower anchors or seat belt, and (3) leaving harness straps too loose when securing a child in a car seat.

- ✓ Children are often transitioned out of the appropriate car seats before it is safe to do so. More than a quarter of children are moved from forward-facing car seats to booster seats too soon, and more than 90% of children using lap-and-shoulder seat belts under the age of 10 should still be in a car seat or booster seat.

- ✓ Parents and caregivers are less likely to seek car seat inspections as children grow into forward-facing and booster car seats. Child passenger safety technicians inspect about four times the amount of rear-facing car seats than they do forward-

facing car seats, and 73% of forward-facing seats are not correctly installed.

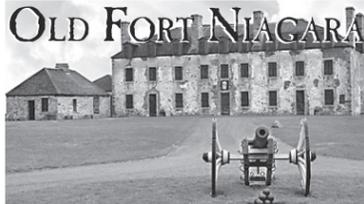
"On average, three children were killed and an estimated 380 children were injured every day in traffic crashes in 2020 according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration," said Elizabeth Carey, director of public relations at AAA Western and Central New York. "Those are disturbing statistics. AAA urges parents and caregivers to educate themselves and look for free resources, such as a virtual or in-person car seat inspections, in local communities."

AAA Western and Central New York urges parents to get a car seat inspection so they can have confidence knowing that their child passenger is protected.

AAA partners with local police agencies and the New York State Police to provide safety resources throughout the community. Child safety seat inspection stations can be located at <https://trafficsafety.ny.gov/child-safety-seat-inspection-stations>.

For more information on child passenger safety, visit www.AAA.com/SafeSeats4Kids.

As upstate New York's largest member services organization, AAA Western and Central New York provides more than 887,000 members with travel, insurance, financial and automotive-related services. Since its founding in 1900, AAA has been a leading advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. Visit AAA at www.AAA.com.



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