



July 15, 2021

Letter in support of Saskatoon John G. Diefenbaker International Airport

Phone 306.242.3060 Fax 306.242.2205

Email
info@nsbasask.com

#9-1724 Quebec Avenue,
Saskatoon, SK S7K 1V9

The Honourable Omar Alghabra, MP
Minister of Transport
330 Sparks Street
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0N5

Dear Minister,

The NSBA (North Saskatoon Business Association) is a Saskatoon-based association that is well-known provincially for its strong voice in serving, promoting, and protecting its members. On behalf of the NSBA members and its Board, we would like to thank you for everything you have done in response to the COVID pandemic these past few months.

In Saskatchewan, the number of fully and partially vaccinated people increases daily, causing a significant drop in our Province's COVID-19 new cases. As of July 11, 2021, all COVID-19 provincial health restrictions were lifted, in a welcome effort to eventually take us back to what we used to know as normal in our Province. Undoubtedly, the aviation, travel, and tourism sector have been a significant part of our Province's economy, and with the Province fully open, we hope to return these sectors to what it was like before the pandemic. However, the Saskatoon John G. Diefenbaker International Airport currently has no indication when international, and U.S. transborder travel will resume, and this is a significant concern for the City of Saskatoon.

Like every other Province, our community enjoyed highly valued non-stop U.S. transborder connectivity and international sun destinations before the pandemic, which enabled important inbound and outbound travel and trade routes for our local economy. Direct air access to Saskatoon allows us to welcome visitors, attract and grow businesses, and ship our local and regional goods to markets around the globe. Further, without a plan for the re-opening of international air travel, our community has a significant concern that the return of those services may be in jeopardy.

Minister, on behalf of the City of Saskatoon, the NSBA and its 700 members, we ask you to please speak to your Cabinet colleagues: Canada needs a plan to restart travel, open the border and the resources to support a safe return to the skies. Respectfully, I ask your government to consider:

.../2



SASKATOON'S BUSINESS ASSOCIATION



July 15, 2021

Letter in support of Saskatoon John G. Diefenbaker International Airport

Phone 306.242.3060 Fax 306.242.2205
Email info@nsbasask.com
#9-1724 Quebec Avenue,
Saskatoon, SK S7K 1V9

- Eliminating the 'funnelling' of international air traffic to only the four largest international airports in Canada. As we emerge from the pandemic, this policy prevents travellers from flying directly to their destination and creates congestion at the 'funnelled' airports as traffic volumes increase.
- Sharing and sufficiently resourcing a phased and feasible border re-opening plan reduces the restrictions imposed on travellers appropriately based on the traveller's vaccination status.
- Engaging with the airport industry on implementing this proposed re-opening plan so that the industry's operational insights inform it on the most effective ways to put the plan into action. Airports are ready to welcome back travellers but need the certainty of implementing passenger flows, baggage routing, and testing infrastructure. The sooner the government can collaborate with the industry, and the more seamless the process will be for travellers as they return and traffic volumes increase.
- Providing essential resources to the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), Canada Border Service Agency (CBSA) and other relevant government departments to operationalize and oversee the safe return of travel at all airports with international and U.S. transborder services.

Minister, with safe travel the critical priority, it is important that when international travel does fully resume that our airport can enable the jobs, investments, and trade it provides.

Sincerely,

Keith Moen
Executive Director

Cc Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada
Stephen Maybury, CEO Saskatoon John G. Diefenbaker International Airport



SASKATOON'S BUSINESS ASSOCIATION