



Statement on Bilateral Commitment to Canada-U.S. Cross-Border Tourism and Travel from Western Canada and the U.S. Northwest

December 9, 2025

For generations, Canada and the United States have shared one of the world's closest and most productive bilateral relationships. Across the Pacific Northwest states and Western Canadian provinces and territories, our shared geography, cultural ties, and family connections bind our border communities even closer together. These connections are sustained every day through the movement of travelers visiting family, conducting business, and exploring the wonders of our region. Our closely connected region with its world-class natural, cultural, and historical assets also makes us particularly attractive to international travelers and gives us the opportunity to work together to deliver a seamless and meaningful travel experience.

As representatives from the Pacific Northwest states and Western Canadian provinces and territories, **we call upon the Canadian and U.S. governments to promote bilateral coordination between our two nations** and work with us to facilitate timely dialogue and collaboration between industry and government. By protecting and promoting our cross-border relationship, we not only strengthen our economies but also deepen the cultural and personal ties that make our region unique.

Tourism is a key economic driver for our region. This past year, our region's tourism and travel industries supported **977,000 workers and generated \$93.2b USD in visitor spending**. Tourism is a gossamer thread running throughout the economy, linking sectors as diverse as hospitality, transportation, agriculture, and technology, and crossing cultural and socio-economic groups as it provides first jobs for youth, flexible opportunities for families, and meaningful engagement for people of all ages in both rural and urban communities. Because tourism is inherently experience-based and people-driven, it cannot be outsourced or automated.

Recent disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, and uneven policy alignment have revealed both the vulnerability and the strategic importance of our cross-border tourism economy. Moreover, travel boycotts – though often well-intentioned – have had an oversized effect on workers, small business owners, and families who rely on tourism for their livelihoods. Instead of discouraging travel, **we must promote positive travel sentiments** – emphasizing our people-to-people connection and treating tourism as the essential export industry it is – one that fuels trade and long-term investment. With our extensive experience inventory and diverse population, we must also **encourage regional travel** as a sustainable part of a functional tourism economy, with its accessibility across socio-economic groups and as an alternative to the various obstacles of foreign travel. In addition, aligning entry policies and communication, increasing staffing at border crossings, and investing in innovative infrastructure and processes will **ensure the safety, efficiency, and ease of cross-border travel** and spotlight our region as a leader of responsible, sustainable, and resilient tourism and travel.

Tourism is a powerful form of diplomacy. When people travel, they exchange ideas, build friendships, and strengthen understanding. Cross-border travel reinforces the historical and cultural bonds between our nations – bonds that were built not only through trade but through the daily movement of people across our region. Our region offers so many rich and unique experiences from our stunning landscapes to our vibrant culinary and cultural scenes – kayaking by the glaciers of Alaska, hiking in the Rockies of Alberta, and skiing down the snowy slopes of British Columbia to soaking in the hot springs of Idaho, spotting bears, wolves, and bison beneath the “Big Sky” of Montana, and dog-sledding the ice roads of the Northwest Territories to riding across the open prairies of Saskatchewan, sipping the craft brews and wines of Oregon, and tasting the fresh produce and seafood in Washington to viewing the breathtaking northern lights of Yukon. Our region stands ready to welcome visitors and demonstrate the strength of our cross-border collaboration.

As leaders in the tourism and travel industry across the Pacific Northwest states and Western Canadian provinces and territories, we reaffirm our shared commitment to a thriving, sustainable, and resilient cross-border tourism economy.

We support:

- **Border Preclearance and Modernization:** Continued investment in digital preclearance, trusted traveler programs, and adequate border staffing to make border crossings safer, more efficient, and more reliable.
- **Consistent and Transparent Travel Policies:** Harmonization of entry policies and procedures between Canada and the U.S. to restore traveler confidence and business stability.
- **Recognition of Tourism as Trade:** Inclusion of tourism in broader trade and economic frameworks, recognizing its role as a major export and engine of regional prosperity.
- **Sustainable Tourism Development:** Collaboration on strategies that balance growth with environmental stewardship and community well-being, ensuring long-term resilience for our destinations.
- **Support for Small Rural, Indigenous, and Tribal Communities:** Targeted policies and investments to strengthen workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure in tourism-dependent areas while preserving the cultural and historical heritage of our region.
- **Strong Cross-Border Engagement:** A shared effort to promote people-to-people diplomacy and invest in stewardship, infrastructure, and innovation.

We call on both the Canadian and U.S. governments to continue working collaboratively with us and our regional partners to ensure that the Canada–U.S. border remains a **bridge of opportunity, not a barrier**, and that our shared tourism economy continues to drive sustainable prosperity for generations to come.

Signing Members:

Alaska

- Senator Jesse Kiehl, *Alaska Legislature*
- Tanya Carlson, *Alaska Travel Industry Association*

Alberta

- MLA Brandon Lundy, *Legislative Assembly of Alberta*
- MLA Shane Getson, *Legislative Assembly of Alberta*
- Stefanie Jones, *Travel Alberta*

British Columbia

- Dave Cowen, *The Butchart Gardens*
- Paul Nursey, *Destination Greater Victoria*

Idaho

- Jeremy Chase, *Visit Idaho*

Montana

- Representative Denise Baum, *Montana Legislature*

Northwest Territories

- Stephanie Hardisty, *Government of Northwest Territories - Tourism and Parks*

Oregon

- Kevin Wright, *Travel Oregon*
- Kate Baumgartner, *Travel Oregon*

Saskatchewan

- Minister Alana Ross, *Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport*

Washington

- Representative Cindy Ryu, *Washington Legislature*
- David Blandford, *State of Washington Tourism*