

## OUR REGION DEPENDS ON IT

The U.S.-Canada land border has been closed for non-essential travel since March 21, 2020 – over a full year. This closure has particularly damaged the tourism, retail, lodging, transportation, gaming, and food service industries while depriving local governments of critical sales tax revenue at a time when they need it most. People hoping to see their loved ones, pursue work opportunities, or maintain their properties are either deemed “non-essential” and forbidden, or they are subject to unreasonably-long mandatory quarantines. Beyond the economic damage caused, the continued border closure is antithetical to the interwoven cultures of Southern Ontario and Western New York, which our residents have long enjoyed.

Our bi-national region encompasses a population of over 8 million people and generates over \$400 billion in gross domestic product. Canadians make more than 3 million cross border trips per year to Western New York, spending in excess of \$900 million when they do. The strength and importance of economic and cultural relationships between our nations cannot be overstated.

## UNITED STATES AND CANADA MUST

- Mutually agree to an implementation plan to reopen the U.S.-Canada land border for “non-essential” crossings.
- Waive quarantine requirements for travelers presenting proof of a COVID-19 vaccination, a negative COVID-19 test within the last 72 hours, or antibodies from a prior positive case of COVID-19.
- Develop plans with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Public Health Agency of Canada to minimize the risk of spreading COVID-19 with an open border, including simplified guides to relevant national, provincial, and state COVID-19 regulations to be given to foreign entrants.
- Prioritize COVID-19 vaccine distribution to employees of the Canada Border Services Agency and U.S. Customs and Border Patrol.