

THE
NEW ENGLAND
COUNCIL

July 7, 2015

The Honorable Jeh Johnson
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Johnson,

On behalf of the New England Council, the nation's oldest regional business organization, I am writing to express the Council's concern over customs wait times at Logan International Airport. I understand that the entire Massachusetts congressional delegation has weighed-in with you recently on this issue.

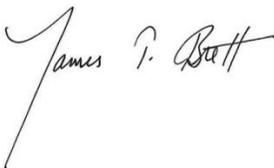
The New England Council is a non-partisan alliance of some 450 businesses, academic and health institutions, and public and private organizations throughout New England formed to promote economic growth and a high quality of life in the New England region. Our members are from all six New England states, representing the wide range of industries that comprise the New England economy, including energy, financial services and insurance, hospitals and healthcare, higher education, defense, advanced technology and manufacturing, as well as construction and transportation. Working on their behalf, the Council articulates the voice of its membership on important issues facing New England.

Boston's Logan International Airport has long been a transportation hub for New England, having served and continuing to serve the aviation needs of generations of citizens from around the region. Logan Airport is also a key destination for overseas tourists and international business leaders alike, with some 5 million travelers last year alone. What's more, international travel is expected to increase in 2015. The New England Council views Logan as a critical economic driver, providing a state of the art aviation destination that helps draw tourists to our region and facilitates new business and growth opportunities, and which will do so for years to come.

Regrettably, as successful as Logan International is, officials at Massport have indicated that the wait time for passport services for arriving passengers has grown, and is currently anywhere between 90 minutes to 3 hours. These wait times are alarming, and when added to the upwards of 60 minutes visitors need to retrieve their luggage and provide declaration cards to Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) officials, the delay is no longer an inconvenience, but a potential negative impact on the economy of our region.

Logan International Airport's development and expansion have been widely documented, and we in New England are excited about the continued opportunity this presents for tourism and business growth. It is imperative that the Department of Homeland Security and its various entities keep pace with the needs of our region and allow a smoother and quicker traveling experience for international passengers. Investing in additional manpower as well as key technological components will no doubt help that happen.

Sincerely,



James T. Brett
President & CEO

The New England Council

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