



**Chambre de commerce
du Montréal métropolitain**
Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal

June 14, 2004

The Honourable A. Anne McLellan, PC/MP
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness
Sir Wilfrid Laurier Building
340 Laurier Avenue West, 13th Floor
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0P8

Madam Deputy Prime Minister:

On behalf of the 7,000 members of the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal, many of whom are exporters and frequent travellers, I would like to express our concern with regards to the current situation at our border crossings, particularly Lacolle. As you may know, travellers and truckers crossing the Canadian border from the U.S. must all too often contend with long delays and thus pay an incalculable price in terms of lost time and efficiency.

As the tourist season quickly approaches, the current situation and the major negative impact it could have on Greater Montreal's economy is a cause of great concern. As you know, the tourism industry was hard hit last year by unforeseen circumstances, forcing Canadian exporters to contend with obstacles they could not control. It would therefore be quite unfortunate if the contract renewal process for employees of the Canada Border Services Agency were to prevent these two key sectors of the economy from fully capitalizing on the recovery that began this year.

I hope this situation can be resolved as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

Benoit Labonté
President and CEO

c.c. Alain Jolicoeur, president, Canada Border Services Agency
Garry F. Douglas, president and CEO, Plattsburgh – North Country Chamber of Commerce