



Border Legislative Conference Resolution No. 2003-03

WHEREAS, Section 110 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Responsibility Act of 1996 mandated the development of an automated entry/exit system, now proposed to be implemented through the U.S. Visit Program; and

WHEREAS, the Border Legislative Conference supports the development of mechanisms which enable safe, secure, and efficient cross-border movement of people and goods, and recognizes the United States' documentation standards and the need for the United States and Mexico to resolve this issue quickly; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Visit Program proposes this implementation at the 50 largest land border ports of entry by December 31, 2004; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has yet to make such an implementation plan public and has not determined the technological tools to integrate this program in all land ports along the U.S. – Mexico border region; and

WHEREAS, information about and knowledge of the specific and conceptual implementation of this program remain limited; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the scarcity of this information, state and local policymakers, cross-border business interests, and concerned citizens are unable to understand the full magnitude of the possible impact on cross -border trade, movement of people and goods, and the environment; and

WHEREAS, members of the Border Legislative Conference are concerned that the possible implementation of this program, without input from interested parties, will negatively affect the border region;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the BLC urges the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to develop a series of comprehensive meetings in locations along the southern and northern borders at which the public elected officials and other stakeholders are able to provide input in the implementation and direction of this program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the implementation of this program shall be delayed until it is clearly demonstrated that it will not harm the NAFTA economies of the border region, or the quality of life for its residents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the U.S. federal government shall establish lines of communication with Mexican authorities on the development of the U.S. Visit program to maximize the positive impacts that can result from more efficient border crossing procedures; and

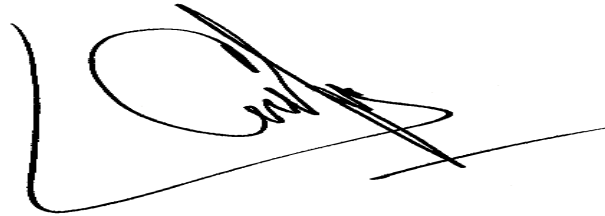
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the U. S. Department of Homeland Security, and other appropriate U.S. federal agencies, consider the expansion of travel distances for Mexican border crossers with laser visas beyond the 72-hour and 25-mile restrictions such that the resulting program shall be applied equally at ports of entry on the U.S./Mexico and U.S./Canada borders, without regard to nationality; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Border Legislative Conference officially commends U.S. Senator John Cornyn of Texas and U.S. Representative Solomon Ortiz of Texas for their efforts in resolving this longstanding problem.

Adopted this 15th of November 2003, at the VI Forum of the Border Legislative Conference in Tucson, Arizona.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Wentworth". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

Senator Jeff Wentworth, Texas
Chair, Border Legislative Conference

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ricardo Arturo Castro Lopez". The signature is highly stylized and cursive.

Diputado Ricardo Arturo Castro Lopez, Chihuahua
Vice Chair, Border Legislative Conference