

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

September 12, 2024

The Honorable Troy A. Miller
Senior Official Performing the Duties of the
Commissioner
U.S. Customs & Border Protection
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW,
Room 3.5A
Washington, DC 20229

The Honorable Peter R. Flores
Acting Deputy Commissioner
U.S. Customs & Border Protection
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Room 3.5A
Washington, DC 20229

Dear Commissioner Troy and Deputy Commissioner Flores,

We write to express our continued concerns over the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's ("CBP") Global Entry Program regarding application processing and wait times. On February 28, 2024, we first wrote to your agency asking a series of questions regarding CBP's capacity and resources to address the growing wait times and processing of Global Entry applications and requested a response by May 31, 2024.¹ To date, no response has been received. **Given the Global Entry Program's impact on business and personal travel for our constituents, we request a response to this letter, as well as the February 28, 2024, letter no later than October 1, 2024.**

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen a significant increase in international travel to and from the United States, which in turn, has resulted in a considerable rise in the number of individuals applying for Global Entry status. As you know, Global Entry is a program that permits expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk travelers upon arrival into the United States. Members enter the United States by accessing the Global Entry processing technology at select airports, including some of the country's busiest—Chicago O'Hare International Airport, Dallas/Ft. Worth International Airport, Hartsfield–Jackson Atlanta International Airport, and Los Angeles International Airport, and John F. Kennedy International Airport, New York.² To receive Global Entry status, U.S. citizens as well as citizens from select

¹ Letter from Members of Congress, to Troy A. Miller, Sr. Off. Performing the Duties of the Comm'r, U.S. Custs. & Border Prot. & Peter R. Flores, Acting Dep'y Comm'r, U.S. Custs. & Border Prot. (Feb. 28, 2024).

² U.S. Customs & Border Prot. Agency, *Airports with Global Entry*, www.cbp.gov/travel/trusted-traveler-programs/global-entry/airports-with-global-entry (last accessed Dec. 30, 2023)

other countries³ must submit an application and pay a \$100 fee.⁴ If approved, they receive access to expedited entry benefits in other countries, reduced wait times at security checkpoints, as well as Transportation Security Administration Pre-Check eligibility.⁵

CBP is reported to receive close to 4 million Global Entry applications this year—an increase of almost 1 million from last year.⁶ As more individuals apply for this program, our congressional district offices continue to hear from constituents contacting us for help, often facing increased processing wait times, and difficulty in obtaining in-person appointments at locations within a reasonable distance in a timely manner. Our offices are often a last resort when constituents need help with Global Entry. Prior to coming to our offices for assistance, almost all constituents have independently sought clarity on anticipated wait times by searching online at CPB’s websites. However, CBP’s websites appear to only add to their confusion by offering them conflicting messages. On one CBP webpage, the agency states wait times and processing for Global Entry takes between 12 to 24 months⁷, while another page claims to take only up to 11 months.⁸ Due to the inadequate transparency and communication by the agency, CBP has left our constituents confused, which impacts how and when our constituents apply for their initial or renewed Global Entry status. As a result, our constituents turn to our offices for assistance. While we are happy to assist in any way we can, we also recognize that dedicating both our district office staff’s time and resources as well as that of the CBP congressional liaisons may be better spent on more urgent constituent services.

Given we are in a post-pandemic world, the increase in Global Entry applications and renewals is not a surprise. As such, Congress expected CBP would have put forth a budget request that addressed this issue by, for example, increasing personnel and, or resources to reduce the wait times associated with processing these applications. However, Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) FY 2025 budget request decreased the number of full-time employees and maintained the same number of positions since Fiscal Year 2023—all despite having to process over 2 million more applications during this two-year timeframe.⁹

In addition to the rise in applications, the lack of accessible locations for in-person interviews has also become a reoccurring issue for our constituents. In the state of Kansas, for

³ Foreign eligibility is available for citizens of Argentina, Brazil, Bahrain, Columbia, India, Germany, the Netherlands, Panama, Singapore, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, United Kingdom, as well as for Mexican Nationals.

⁴ U.S. Customs & Border Prot. Agency, *Airports with Global Entry*, www.cbp.gov/travel/trusted-traveler-programs/global-entry/how-apply (last accessed Dec. 30, 2023).

⁵ U.S. Customs & Border Prot. Agency, *How to Apply for Global Entry*, www.cbp.gov/travel/trusted-traveler-programs/global-entry/benefits (last accessed Dec. 30, 2023).

⁶ Rebecca Santana, *US Customs and Border Protection to raise fee for Global Entry to \$120*, Fox (Apr. 28, 2024), www.fox61.com/article/news/nation-world/global-entry-fees-increased-as-us-expands-tech-in-airports/507-2f2be236-8f16-4967-8301-0a46fd599904.

⁷ U.S. Dep’t of Homeland Sec., *Trusted Traveler Program*, <https://htp.dhs.gov/> (last accessed July 17, 2024).

⁸ U.S. Cust. & Border Prot. Agency, *How Long Does it Take to Apply for Global Entry, SENTRI, NEXUS or FAST?*, https://help.cbp.gov/s/article/Article-1885?language=en_US (last accessed July 17, 2024).

⁹ U.S. Dep’t of Homeland Sec. - U.S. Cust. & Border Prot., *Budget Overview – FY 2025*, at 538 (Apr. 2024) www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2024-04/2024_0314_us_customs_and_border_protection.pdf.

example, there are currently no Global Entry enrollment centers that process the required interview for clearance in Kansas. To obtain an in-person interview, these constituents are required to travel out of state to surrounding states like Missouri, Iowa, or Nebraska. Even then, the appointments for the Global Entry processing centers in these states yield an average wait time of close to 100 days.

Given the impact Global Entry has for travel and our economy, we request that you respond to this letter and the questions asked in the February 28, 2024, letter no later than August 31, 2024.

1. How many new Global Entry applications has CBP received since January 1, 2024?
2. How many Global Entry renewal applications has CBP received since January 1, 2024?
3. How many new Global Entry applications has CBP processed since January 1, 2024?
4. How many new Global Entry applications and renewal applications are currently awaiting review by officers?
5. How many officers are currently assigned to review Global Entry applications, and what, if any, changes have there been regarding these officer staffing levels over the last year?
6. What steps has CBP taken to expedite application processes for individuals seeking renewal of their Global Entry status, and is CBP considering any additional initiatives?
7. How does CBP determine what information it shares with the general public about Global Entry application delays and backlogs?
8. Does CBP provide information and materials to the public about what Congressional Offices can do in assisting their constituents with issues associated with their Global Entry applications? If so, please provide such materials.
9. Please provide a timeline for the return of Global Entry applications processing times to pre-pandemic levels.
10. Please provide a justification for decreasing the number of full-time employees as put forth in CBP's budget request for Fiscal Year 2025.
11. Please provide any preliminary information or reports CPB has available to it regarding decreased application processing wait times and interview wait times as a result implementing CBP's new pilot online interview process.
12. Does CBP track information regarding the average distance individuals must travel in order to meet with CBP for an in-person interview? If yes, please provide such information and materials.
13. Does CBP believe the current number of location sites for in person interviews is sufficient to address the current wait time for interviews? If not, what, if any, additional site locations is CBP considering to address the current backlog.

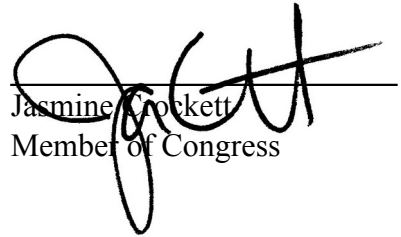
14. Does CPB believe that accessibility to in-person interviews can be a significant hurdle for those applying for Global Entry, especially for constituents in more rural areas?
15. Please identify specific resources, authorities, or support Congress can provide that could alleviate the current backlog of Global Entry applications and prevent backlogs in the future.

* * * * *

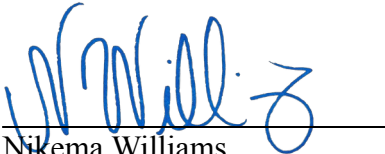
Sincerely,



Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress
Kansas Third District



Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress