



## INFORMATION BULLETIN

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**DATE: June 11, 2009**

**SUBJECT: WHTI Impacts**

**SOURCE: Detroit Free Press**

A Detroit area congressman today won passage of an amendment calling on the [Obama](#) administration to find out if new border requirements are hurting Michigan's economy at a time when it has enough stress on it already.

The new rules force anyone to produce a passport or similar document when crossing not only the border in Mexico but the international line at Windsor or Sarnia.

By a voice vote in the House, U.S. Rep. Gary Peters' amendment was attached to the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, which also passed the House and now goes to the Senate for consideration.

The measure by Peters, a Bloomfield Township Democrat, would require the Obama administration to assess the economic impact of the new border rules, which are part of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative and went into effect June 1.

"We need to know exactly how new passport requirements are affecting Michigan's economy," said Peters.

Sarah Hubbard, an official at the Detroit Regional Chamber, said the concern is that the WHTI rules could slow traffic — meaning less trade — which in turn can particularly hurt small businesses.

Peters' amendment requires the U.S. [State Department](#) to study the effect of WHTI passport rules on U.S. residents and businesses and report on their findings to Congress. The amendment stipulates the report should pay specific attention to the effects on small businesses.

Michigan has more surface trade traffic with Canada than any other state — \$67 billion in 2008.