



## EBTC NEWS

**DATE: January 21, 2015**

**SUBJECT: *As Peace Bridge pilot project comes to a close, Higgins calls for swift review and action on pre-inspection***

**SOURCE: *Niagara Frontier Publications, 1/20/15***

As the pilot project to pre-inspect commercial vehicles entering the U.S. on the Canadian side of the Peace Bridge comes to a close, Congressman Brian Higgins is pushing for a swift review followed by further action to expedite measures that allow for the efficient flow of traffic along the northern border.

"This test period was a good first step, but further action to expand and improve the movement of people and goods across the border is essential to the growth of the Western New York and U.S. economies," Higgins said.

His advocacy for the pilot project goes back to February 2012, when, in a House Homeland Security hearing, he pushed for the Peace Bridge to be included in a study of pre-inspection along the northern border.

The effort was born out of the "Beyond the Border" plan, a collaborative agreement between the U.S. and Canada to better coordinate border operations and expand the binational relationship.

Phase I of a pilot project to allow for U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers to pre-inspect trucks coming into the U.S. in Canada began June 17, 2013, at the Pacific Highway crossing between Blaine, Washington, and Surry, British Columbia, and concluded in January 2014.

Phase II of the pilot project brought pre-inspection to the Peace Bridge early in 2014. The effort allowed for the pre-inspection of U.S.-bound truck cargo on the Canadian side of the bridge to streamline traffic flow and provide efficiencies.

This phase is scheduled to conclude Jan. 20 and will be followed by an independent review to analyze the success of the program.

Higgins visited the Peace Bridge a pre-inspection site with U.S. Customs & Border Protection Commissioner Gil Kerlikowske on Aug. 14. Higgins serves as a member of

the House committees on homeland security and foreign affairs, U.S.-Canada interparliamentary exchange and co-chairs the congressional northern border caucus. Higgins said he is hopeful the pilot will be proven successful and is eager to work toward legislative and budgetary adjustments to implement a permanent, full-scale pre-inspection program at the Peace Bridge.

- See more at: <http://www.wnypapers.com/news/article/current/2015/01/20/119247/as-peace-bridge-pilot-project-comes-to-a-close-higgins-calls-for-swift-review-and-action-on-pre-inspection#sthash.H4PZHXd.dpuf>