
News Release

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CANADA-U.S. AGREEMENT LEADS TO INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION FOR IMPROVED CUSTOMS SERVICES

The Government of Canada today announced that it has introduced legislation into the Senate that defines the authorities for U.S. Customs and Immigration officers in preclearance areas in Canadian airports. The proposed legislation paves the way for the expansion of streamlined intransit preclearance facilities in Canadian airports. These arrangements will be reciprocated by the United States.

"This new legislation provides for faster and easier access to the United States, and ensures travellers' rights under Canadian law," said Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy. "The Preclearance Act is a key element in our efforts to build a 21st century border with the U.S."

The Preclearance Act will provide U.S. preclearance officers with appropriate authorities to clear people and goods into the United States, while ensuring that travellers' rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms are fully protected.

"Expansion of intransit preclearance services to Canadian airports allows Canadian air carriers and airports to build on the Open Skies agreement," said Transport Minister David Collenette. "This legislation reflects the success of the Agreement and the willingness of our countries to co-operate with a focus on the future of transport."

"This reciprocal legislation will enable Canada and the United States to modernize the management of our shared border," said National Revenue Minister Herb Dhaliwal. "The Preclearance Act will benefit travellers and Canadian businesses that depend on an efficient border."

Canada and the United States also announced agreement on nation-wide expansion of intransit preclearance services. Intransit preclearance services have been provided at the Vancouver International Airport on a pilot basis since June 1997. Under this initiative, all Canadian airports with existing U.S. preclearance facilities will be eligible for intransit preclearance services. Intransit services at Vancouver will be eligible for indefinite extension. Toronto's Pearson International Airport and the Aéroport de



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