

## **CHANGE IN LAW MAY CAUSE MESS AT CANADIAN BORDER**

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

October 11, 1997, Saturday, FIVE STAR LIFT EDITION

Copyright 1997 St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Inc.

**Section:** NEWS, Pg. 2B

**Length:** 675 words

**Byline:** 1997,; Knight-Ridder Newspapers

**Dateline:** WASHINGTON

### **Body**

---

half-mile below the **Canadian border**, in the scenic northern Minnesota town of Grand Portage, sits a store the locals call Ryden's.

The shop is where tourists go to buy T-shirts and where area residents go for a quick bite to eat. It's also where Canadians go to buy cheap gasoline and duty-free liquor.

As her business flourishes, Lori Ryden-Boomer is bothered by the nagging thought that new immigration rules will make it more difficult for Canadians to get there. Customers are already complaining.

"It's a source of concern for us," said Ryden-Boomer, whose family has owned the **border** shop for 50 years. "If they don't come, business will definitely go down."

Tucked away in the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 is a new method of formally documenting the arrival and departures of foreigners. The provision is to take effect late next year.

The U.S. **law** was written to address the large flow of illegal immigrants, most of them entering from Mexico. But critics - including some in Congress - say the measure illustrates how the northern **border** is often overloaded in the larger illegal immigration debate.

They are outraged that the country would require people crossing the **Canadian border** to produce identification documents when they've never had to before. The result, they say, will be mile-long traffic jams at **border** crossing points and a disruption of trade and tourism between the United States and Canada.

"Just pause for a moment and visualize what this means," said D.G. Waddell, an economics official at the **Canadian** Embassy in Washington. "Frankly, we are alarmed, disappointed, and just a little frustrated."

Lawmakers say the frustration is justified, though it **may** be short-lived. The two authors of the immigration **law** - Rep. Lamar Smith, R-Texas, chairman of the House immigration subcommittee, and former Sen. Alan Simpson, R-Wyo. - said they never intended for the documentation requirement to apply to Canadians.

At least two lawmakers - Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., and Rep. John LaFalce, D-N.Y. - are trying to amend the **law** to exclude America's northern **border** from the documentation requirement.

"The oversight in this provision is the failure to exempt the **Canadian** nationals who previously have not been required to fill out documents," said "LaFalce, whose district in northern New York is visited heavily by Canadians. "If the (United States) were to implement the entry and exit procedure, traffic would turn into a nightmare at the **border**."

## CHANGE IN LAW MAY CAUSE MESS AT CANADIAN BORDER

Even Immigration and Naturalization Service officials said they would support congressional language to ease the furor.

Here's why:

According to the **Canadian** Embassy, more than 116 million people entered the United States by land from Canada last year, 76 million of them **Canadian**. In 95 percent of those crossings, **border** patrol agents simply asked quick questions about where the traveler was headed in the United States and why.

Under the new immigration **law**, all travelers would have to show some kind of identification document, although exactly what is unclear. The **border** agent would then log that traveler's information for future reference, **causing** the traveler to stop for what could be several minutes.

The identification rules would also apply to everyone: Americans returning home after a visit to Canada, people who cross daily for jobs on the other side of the **border**, family members visiting relatives. "Optimistically, the new controls might take an extra two minutes per **border** crosser," said Sen. Spencer Abraham, R-Mich., who opposed the provision. "That's almost 17 hours of delay for every hour's worth of traffic."

Still others question the move to exempt the northern **border**.

"Some people would say it's unfair to exempt one group of people and not another," said Bill Strassberger, a spokesman for the immigration service. "They see the conflict, but they say illegal immigration is illegal no matter what **border** you're looking at."

## Classification

---

**Language:** English

**Subject:** IMMIGRATION **LAW** (89%); ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS (89%); IMMIGRATION (89%); US REPUBLICAN PARTY (88%); TERRITORIAL & NATIONAL **BORDERS** (74%); **BORDER** CONTROL (74%); US DEMOCRATIC PARTY (73%); IMMIGRATION REGULATION & POLICY (71%); LEGISLATION (68%); WRITERS (62%); OIL & GAS PRICES (52%); EMBASSIES & CONSULATES (50%)

**Industry:** WRITERS (62%); OIL & GAS PRICES (52%)

**Person:** BYRON DORGAN (50%); LAMAR SMITH (50%)

**Geographic:** MINNESOTA, USA (79%); TEXAS, USA (79%); CANADA (94%); NORTH AMERICA (93%); UNITED STATES (93%)

**Load-Date:** October 15, 1997