

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 27, 2023

The Honorable Rina Bitter
Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs
Bureau of Consular Affairs
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Assistant Secretary Bitter:

The American people's ability to travel is integral to intercultural exchange, economic development, and the reunification of travelers with family and friends who live abroad. Unfortunately, passport application backlogs, geographic barriers, and costs keep too many Americans from sharing equitably in this vision of a mobile and internationally involved populace.

We write to you today to urge you to consider opening a passport agency in Louisville, Kentucky – a major hub of national and international travel and a significant regional powerhouse without ready access to a nearby passport processing location. Indeed, those in the area must travel roughly 5 hours to Chicago or Detroit, 7 hours to Atlanta, or 9 hours to Hot Springs, Arkansas, to get to their closest passport agency. This distance places an undue economic, time, and social burden on those in the area, exacerbating frustration and overall constituent dissatisfaction with the system. Moreover, the lack of a passport agency in this heavily populated area of the country hikes wait times in other passport agencies in a spillover effect that increases backlogs across the board and strains workloads for our public servants.

A new passport agency in Louisville, Kentucky, would help reduce these aches by servicing population centers in Nashville, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, St. Louis, and other population hubs, not to mention the wide swaths of rural areas within the Ohio River Basin. As an accessible location, Louisville sits at the crossroads of several major interstates, and its airport serves as a major regional hub.

Thus, we write to ask:

- 1. Are there any current initiatives to explore the opening of a passport agency in Louisville, Kentucky?**
- 2. If not, what steps can be taken to explore the idea?**

We appreciate all that you and the Bureau of Consular Affairs undertake to bolster the international travel and exchange of Americans abroad. We respectfully request that the Bureau consider the construction of a passport agency in Louisville, Kentucky, to ensure that all Americans can share in the vision of international cooperation and travel without undue hassle, distance, or delay.

Sincerely,



Morgan McGarvey
Member of Congress



Erin Houchin
Member of Congress



Brett Guthrie
Member of Congress



Thomas Massie
Member of Congress