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**RADIO TELEVISION DIGITAL NEWS ASSOCIATION**  
**RADIO TELEVISION DIGITAL NEWS FOUNDATION**

March 18, 2021

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas,

On behalf of the Radio Television Digital News Association, its members and the thousands of broadcast and digital journalists we represent in the United States and throughout the world, I am writing with regard to concerning reports that Border Patrol officials are limiting access even to basic information about border processing facilities.

It is even more alarming that this apparent “gag order” has allegedly been made by officials at the very highest levels in the Department of Homeland Security.

At a time when the southern border of the United States is undergoing a historic surge of migrants, it is more important than ever that journalists be allowed the necessary access to report accurately and independently on the Border Patrol’s response to the increased arrival of migrants and the wellbeing of those housed in Border Patrol facilities.

The lack of information and collaboration from the Border Patrol and Department of Homeland Security has also created a vacuum of sorts that traditionally biased sources are filling with information that serves only their political interests. This dynamic is not conducive to efforts by journalists to communicate unbiased information to the public nor is it constructive to the heated dialogue of elected officials both locally and nationally.

As you know, journalists serve their communities and the nation at large by seeking and reporting the truth regarding matters of public importance, particularly as it relates to actions the federal government is taking in people’s name and on their behalf.

Respectfully, I ask that the Department of Homeland Security immediately allow journalists access to Border Patrol processing facilities and interviews with Border Patrol officials.

In addition, I welcome a conversation with you and your staff on how to implement quickly a level of access and information-sharing that will allow journalists to report, in real time, the dynamic situation at our southern border in a safe and collaborative manner.

Sincerely,

