U.S. Rep. Fitzgerald: Leads letter concerning passport delays

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WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congressman Scott Fitzgerald led 43 of his colleagues in [sending a letter](#) to the Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, concerning the significant delays for new and existing passport applicants.

On March 19, 2020, the State Department paused the passport application process due to the COVID-19 pandemic. **By June 2020**, the Department was forced to recall essential employees to address a more than **1.8 million passport backlog**, causing applicants to delay their passport request or face severe processing delays.

On July 12, 2021, the Department released updated passport guidance warning new and existing applicants of severe delays for both routine and expedited services. According to the Department's website, applicants are asked to wait up to 18 weeks for routine passport services or pay an additional $60 per application for expedited services to reduce your wait time to 12 weeks. Even expedited service has not guaranteed timely delivery.

"The State Department's backlog of passport applications needs to be answered for. I've heard from countless constituents who have had to cancel or postpone their travel plans and others who have had to spend a significant amount of time and money to get their passport application approved," **said Congressman Fitzgerald.** *"This problem is occurring all across the country and my colleagues who joined me in this letter have all received similar stories from their constituents. The Department's efforts to resolve this matter have been ineffective and are needlessly costing taxpayers additional money, only to still receive their passports late. Secretary Blinken owes the American people answers to our questions and solutions to this significant problem."*

Read the full letter [here](#).