

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 10, 2014

The Honorable Barack H. Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

We write to respectfully request that you include Phase 1 of the Calexico West Land Port of Entry (LPOE) reconfiguration and expansion project in your FY 2015 Budget Request. Strengthening our trade, commerce, and security along the US-Mexico border is of the utmost importance to our region and our Nation.

Mexico is California's top trade partner and improving the Calexico West LPOE is an essential part of enhancing California's economy. Cross-border trade between California and Mexico, both imports and exports, was valued at more than \$190 billion in 2011. According to a 2007 study by the Imperial Valley Association of Governments, California businesses lost an estimated \$436 million and 5,639 jobs directly attributable to long border crossing wait times. We believe that updating this border crossing will encourage economic growth and ultimately help create jobs that are critically important to our region, specifically for Imperial County, which had a reported yearly average unemployment rate of 25.2 percent in 2013.

The existing LPOE was constructed in 1974 and serves as a pedestrian and vehicle inspection facility. More than 16,000 privately-owned vehicles (POVs) and 20,000 pedestrians enter the United States through this LPOE on a daily basis. The existing facilities are undersized relative to existing traffic loads and obsolete in terms of inspection officer safety and border security. In addition, the space required for modern inspection technologies is not available, the workspace is too small to accommodate additional staff, systems, and equipment required at the facility, and the Department of Homeland Security's ability to accomplish its rapidly changing mission is seriously compromised by the inadequacy of the existing facilities.

The Calexico West LPOE project includes new pedestrian processing and POV inspection facilities that will consist of 16 northbound lanes and five southbound lanes, a new administration space, a new headhouse, 32 secondary inspection stations serving northbound and southbound traffic, and a total of 340 parking spaces. The project will be constructed in two phases. Phase 1 will consist of ten northbound POV inspection lanes, a headhouse, and sitework necessary to accommodate those facilities on the sloping site, with an estimated project cost of \$100 million for construction. Phase 2 will consist of the balance of the project including additional sitework, a pedestrian processing facility, administrative offices, five southbound POV inspection lanes, and six additional northbound POV inspection lanes, with an estimated cost of \$275 million for construction.

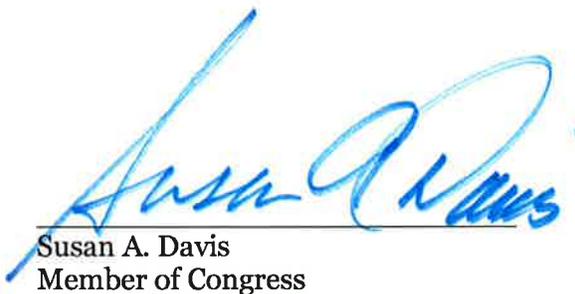
As you finalize your FY 2015 Budget Request, we urge you to include \$100 million in funding for the completion of Phase 1 of the Calexico West Land Port of Entry reconfiguration and expansion project.

Thank you for your consideration of this funding request. Completing this project will improve domestic supply chains, strengthen our national security, and facilitate economic growth, not only for the greater region, but also for the entire nation.

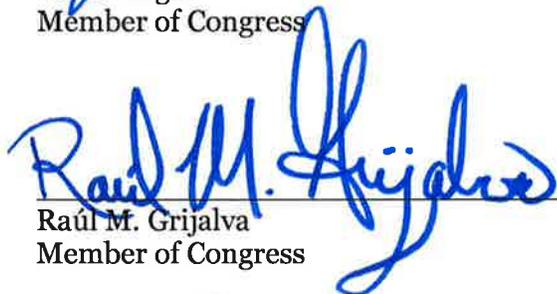
Sincerely,



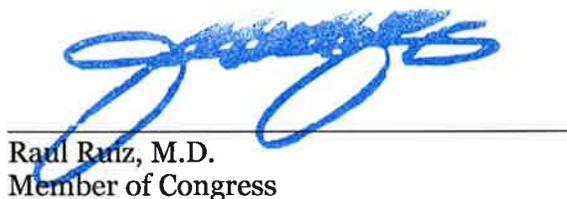
Juan Vargas
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