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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0306

March 27, 2024

COMMITTEES:

APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES
TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING, AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION
FINANCIAL SERVICES AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT

VETERANS' AFFAIRS

SUBCOMMITTEES
DISABILITY ASSISTANCE AND MEMORIAL AFFAIRS
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20529

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

I write to urge you to take immediate action to begin dispersing funds from the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2024, which recently passed Congress. This bill includes multiple provisions that can help address the border crisis that communities like mine in Arizona are facing.

In order to properly secure the southern border, we must utilize an all of the above approach, providing U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents and officers with a mix of workforce, technology, and resources. On Monday, March 25th I had the opportunity to visit with Border Patrol agents in Tucson Sector and following our conversation, I believe the prompt use of the following funds would be of great assistance to the overrun agents there:

Immigration and Customs Enforcement Detention and Removal Activities

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) has been appropriated \$3.345 billion for custody operations. This includes funding for 41,500 detention beds, far higher than what is currently available.

To send a signal to bad actors who do not qualify for asylum in the United States, we need to be holding migrants in detention. According to agents in Tucson Sector, ICE ERO is currently taking custody of less than 50 migrants per day, on average, in their sector. Tucson Sector is encountering and processing about 1,000 migrants daily. In order to stop this surge, I urge you to rapidly increase the available number of ICE beds as provided for in your current appropriation.

Customs and Border Protection Personnel

CBP has been provided \$469.2 million for 22,000 Border Patrol Agents and \$19.6 million for 150 new CBP Office of Field Operations officers. In recent months, in Tucson Sector alone, we have seen the temporary closure of both Ports of Entry and Border Checkpoints.

A properly staffed workforce is crucial to not only border security, but also facilitating lawful trade and travel. Unfortunately, we are seeing high numbers of agents and officers pulled from their everyday duties in order to perform processing functions. By rapidly hiring additional

agents and officers, your department can ensure our ports are fully staffed and our checkpoints open.

Border Technology

CBP has been appropriated \$283.4 million for new border security technology, on top of the \$103 million to sustain current border technology, and \$348 million for Non-Intrusive Inspection equipment. Border technology, in its variety of forms – including integrated and autonomous surveillance towers, cross-border tunnel technology, and mobile surveillance technology – help our agents and officers on the front lines.

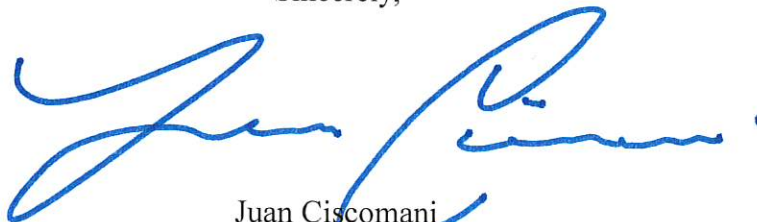
Technology is crucial to detecting bad actors who are evading law enforcement, seizing illicit drugs and helping our agents and officers keep up with new tactics created by the cartels. I urge you to quickly deploy funds to each of the technology security priorities outlined in your appropriations bill.

Services and Shelter Program

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's Shelter and Services Program (SSP) has been appropriated \$650 million for Fiscal Year 2024. Current estimates for previously allocated SSP funds in Arizona indicate that funding may run out as early as next week.

In order to avoid street releases in our communities, I encourage you to swiftly allocate funding to communities along our southwest border – where migrants enter the U.S. and are released by CBP. As you know, Tucson Sector is currently seeing record numbers of migrant encounters, well surpassing other southern border sectors. As you make funding decisions for SSP, I encourage you to strongly consider proximity to the border as well as sector apprehension data.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Juan Ciscomani', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Juan Ciscomani
Member of Congress