



Cochise County Board of Supervisors

Public Programs...Personal Service
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PEGGY JUDD
Supervisor
District 3

May 23, 2017

Honorable John McCain
United States Senate
218 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Jeff Flake
United States Senate
Senate Russell Office Building 413
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Martha McSally
United States House of Representatives
510 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Administrator Scott Pruitt
US Environmental Protection Agency
1200 NW Pennsylvania Avenue
Mail Code: 1101A
Washington, D.C. 20460

Subject: **URGENT Request to Maintain EPA's US-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program with funding appropriation**

Dear Senator McCain, Senator Flake and Congresswoman McSally:

Cochise County respectfully urges the US Congress to **appropriate funds to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) FY2018 budget for the United States-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP) with the State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG)** which assists communities to address drinking water and wastewater infrastructure in the U.S.-Mexico border region. Funds from this program have improved the financial feasibility of projects, increased the affordability for residents to access these basic services, and helped to institute good business practices to support long-term operations of the investments.

Technical assistance funding from the BWIP is **one of only a few sources which helps communities to develop preliminary engineering reports, environmental clearance documents and final design** for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects. Without these critical engineering tasks, complete, infrastructure cannot be built and most programs will not even consider a project's application for funding. In fact, **BWIP offers significant leveraging power for obtaining construction resources**, aiding our efforts to coordinate with other agencies and prompting local or state level funding participation. Once those commitments are secured, the BWIP has been utilized to address the funding gap, resulting in an investment of more than \$2.00 from other programs to every \$1.00 invested by BWIP.

We continue to need to extend and improve our water and wastewater systems to assure reliable and safe services, protecting the environment and health of our residents. Specifically, funding resources from BWIP have been utilized to design and now construct the City of Douglas wastewater plant which will enable hundreds of low income residents and their families living in the Bay Acres Colonia to achieve sewer connectivity. They have been living with out of date and dangerous septic tanks for decades. In addition this program is going to be providing the funding for the engineering at Whetstone Water Improvement District. As an economically-distressed community, we continuously work to be prepared to pay an important share of the capital and long-term operations and maintenance costs of the infrastructure; however, without BWIP funds, project needs are likely to be delayed or unmet.

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Bisbee, Arizona 85603
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520-432-5016 fax
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Finally, as you are aware, **infrastructure investment is a driver for new private sector economic activity** in our community, without which we cannot change our current economic conditions. With continued support for water infrastructure projects in our communities we can ensure that expansion in our border regions are adequately built to support the expansion of the Douglas Port of entry and any plans for an additional Commercial Port of Entry.

This program merits your support for a funding in the FY2018 and future budget proposals. **We respectfully request that you protect the allocation of funding for the US-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program and encourage you to find a way to increase program funding** to protect the environment and health of residents in and beyond the border region. Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Ann English
Chairman
District 2

Patrick G. Call
Vice-Chairman
District 1

Peggy Judd
Supervisor
District 3

CC: **U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations**, 188 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC 20510
Senator Thad Cochran, *Chair, U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee*; United States Senate, 113 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510-2402
Senator Lamar Alexander, *Chair, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development*; United States Senate, 455 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510
Senator Dianne Feinstein, *Ranking Member on Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development*; United States Senate, 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510
Senator Lindsey Graham, *Chair, Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs*; United States Senate, 290 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510
Senator Lisa Murkowski, *Chair, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies*; United States Senate, 800 Glacier Ave, Suite 101, Juneau, AK 99801
Senator Tom Udall, *Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies*; United States Senate, 531 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC, 20510
U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations, H-305, The Capitol, Washington, DC 20515
Congressman Rodney P. Frelinghuysen, *Chair, U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Committee*, United States House of Representatives, 2306 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515-3011
Congressman Mike Simpson, *Chair, Subcommittee on Energy and Water*, United States House of Representatives, 2084 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515
Congressman Ken Calvert, *Chair, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies*; United States House of Representatives, 2205 Rayburn Building, Washington, DC 20515
Congressman Hal Rogers, *Chair, Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs*, United States House of Representatives, 2406 Rayburn House Office Bldg, Washington, DC 20515
Congressman Henry Cuellar, Member, U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Committee, United States House of Representatives, 2209 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515
Mike Flynn, US EPA Acting Deputy Administrator, **Mail Code: 1101A**, 1200 NW Pennsylvania Ave, Washington, D.C. 20460
Michael H. Shapiro, Acting Assistant Administrator, Office of Water, US EPA HQ, **Mail Code: 4101M**, 1200 NW Pennsylvania Ave, Washington, D.C. 20460
Andrew Sawyers, Director, Office of Wastewater Management, US EPA HQ, **Mail Code: 4201M**, 1200 NW Pennsylvania Ave, Washington, D.C. 20460
Sheila Frace, Deputy Director, Office of Wastewater Management, US EPA HQ, **Mail Code: 4204M**, 1200 NW Pennsylvania Ave, Washington, D.C. 20460
Sam Coleman P.E., US EPA Region 6 Acting Regional Administrator, **Mail Code: 6RAD**, 1445 Ross Ave., Ste. 1200, Dallas, TX 75202
Alexis Strauss, US EPA Region 9 Acting Regional Administrator, **Mail Code: ORA-1**, 75 Hawthorne St., San Francisco, CA 94105
Maria Elena Giner, BECC General Manager, P. O. Box 221648, El Paso, TX 79913

Alex Hinojosa, NADB General Manager, 203 S. St. Mary's, Ste. 300, San Antonio, TX 78205