



December 12, 2013

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

RE: CBP Staffing in the FY 2014 Budget

Dear Senator McCain,

On behalf of the Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority (the Port Authority), I write to request your assistance in securing additional staffing for our ports of entry at Nogales. The current budget negotiations indicate that there is an effort to include as many as 20,000 new Border Patrol agents. That would essentially double the number of Border Patrol agents but there is nothing in the budget that would allocate staffing to Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and our ports of entry

While we are strong advocates for the smart deployment of staffing and technology to our borders between the ports of entry, there needs to be an equal effort to provide additional staff for our port of entry. Our nation's ports of entry with Mexico processed close to 314 million people, 18,000 trains, 10.2 million trucks and 125 million cars in two-way traffic in 2012 – and all indicators are that 2013 will surpass 2012, with a continuing upward trend for the foreseeable future. Our ports of entry process well over \$1 billion in trade every day of the year. Yet the allocation of staffing for CBP at our ports of entry has remained stagnant since 2009.

For Nogales we have a very direct concern: we fear that the Mariposa Reconfiguration project, which is scheduled to be completed by August of 2014, and will more than triple the throughput capacity for the port of entry, will not be fully staffed. In fact, our ports of entry at Nogales are not up to full staffing today. It usually takes at least a year from the time that a new officer is hired to the time they are deployed at the port of entry. Without a conscious effort to assign sufficient personnel to our ports investment like those made at Mariposa, will simply go underutilized – most certainly nowhere near their full capacity!

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With more than 60% of our local sales tax directly attributable to our Mexican visitors, the efficiency of our ports of entry is critical to our livelihoods. Furthermore, Arizona reached \$13 billion in two-way trade with Mexico and all expectations are that 2013 will set a new record for trade with Mexico. Our ports of entry are critical to Arizona and to our nation.

On behalf of our member organizations, the City of Nogales, Santa Cruz County, Nogales US Customs House Brokers Association, Nogales-Santa Cruz County Economic Development Foundation, Nogales Community Development Corporation, and the Maquiladora Association of Sonora, I ask that you work with your colleagues in both the House of Representatives and the US Senate to ensure that our ports of entry are not lost in the debate and that they receive the attention they deserve.

The efficiency of our ports of entry is an essential component of our local and regional economies and the very livelihood of our binational community. We thank you for your continued support and attention to this critical issue.

Respectfully,



Bruce Bracker
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Jeff Flake, US Senate
The Honorable Ron Barber, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Raul Grijalva, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Ed Pastor, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Matt Salmon, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Kyrsten Sinema, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Anne Kirkpatrick, US House of Representatives
The Honorable David Schweikert, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Trent Franks, US House of Representatives
The Honorable Paul Gosar, US House of Representatives
John Halikowski, Director, Arizona Department of Transportation
Margie Emmermann, Office of the Governor