



United States Senate

January 24, 2018

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Mulvaney,

I write to bring your attention to the attached letter from the National Border Patrol Council and to join its request that you include \$20 million for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) U.S.-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program in the President's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget.

Due to geography and inadequate wastewater infrastructure on the Mexican side of the border, untreated sewage, trash, and sediment routinely flow into U.S. communities. These toxic transboundary flows jeopardize the health of U.S. Border Patrol officers and U.S. residents, require the regular closure of U.S. beaches, and endanger sensitive wildlife habitat.

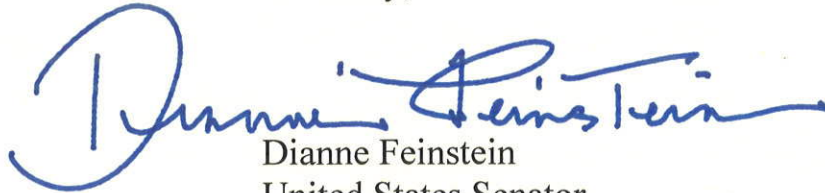
According to the Border Patrol Union, 80 agents at the Imperial Beach Patrol Station were sickened in just the last year from toxic transboundary runoff that could be addressed through increased resources for the EPA's U.S.-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program. Therefore, expanding the EPA's U.S.-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program will not only improve the quality of life for U.S. communities along the border but also improve the safety of U.S. Border Patrol officers and their ability to fully patrol our southern border.

EPA's U.S.-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program funds competitive grants to help finance critical infrastructure projects including construction of sewage collectors in Mexico to reduce polluted runoff to the U.S., wastewater treatment plants on both sides of the border, and residential and commercial sewer connections on both sides of the border to prevent illegal dumping into rivers and streams.

It is worth noting that President Trump retweeted a *Fox News* article on August 9, 2017 highlighting the threat to U.S. Border Patrol officers posed by the

transboundary flows, and I hope you will seriously consider the funding request made by the Border Patrol Union, which endorsed President Trump during the 2016 election.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Dianne Feinstein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D".

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Enclosure: Letter from the National Border Patrol Council re: EPA Mexico
Border Program

cc: The Honorable Scott Pruitt, Administrator of the Environmental Protection
Agency

December 20, 2017

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director
The Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Mulvaney,

We write to respectfully request that you include \$20 million for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP) in the President's Fiscal Year 2019 budget.

This program is critically important to Border Patrol agents operating in the San Diego Sector, as it funds priority wastewater infrastructure projects along the U.S.-Mexico international border/boundary - which helps prevent sewage/toxic chemicals and pollution from negatively impacting the health and safety of our agents and other employees (mechanics, etc.).

U.S. Border Patrol Agents are frequently exposed to sewage, chemicals, solvents, and heavy metal pollutants as they patrol the border in close proximity to, and sometimes in, cross-border flows. In 2017, over 80 agents at the Imperial Beach Border Patrol Station alone have suffered contamination, injuries, and illnesses related to transboundary runoff – this has reached a point where the President of the United States has expressed concerns. These negative health impacts have included rashes, infections (both dermal & respiratory), chemical burns, and inhalation burns/irritation to the lungs from off-gassing. By funding much needed infrastructure improvements, agents will be less exposed to harmful waste, and hopefully mitigate some of the negative health & safety effects.

The negative repercussions are not limited to just health & safety effects – but can easily limit/curtail our operations in these areas – very much hindering our ability to patrol and secure these areas on the border. We already know from interviewing apprehended subjects that the Transnational Criminal Organizations/Smuggling Organizations are directing the illegal entrants to utilize these areas, in the hopes of evading detection and apprehension.

Our Union, the National Border Patrol Council (NBPC), represents over 19,000 employees in the United States Border Patrol – with Local 1613, NBPC representing over 1600 in the San Diego Sector.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Our Union sincerely appreciates your ongoing commitment to the health and safety of our membership, and our continuing efforts to secure our Nation's borders and keep our citizenry safe.

If you or your staff have any questions, please feel free to have your staff contact me at: cookincop@aol.com, or 858-922-3197.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Harris
Secretary - Local 1613, NBPC, AFGE
Director - Legislative & Political Affairs
San Diego, CA