



STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KATIE HOBBS
GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

March 12, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Murray, Chair Granger, Vice Chair Collins, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I write to you today with a sense of urgency on behalf of the people of Arizona. As Governor, it is my duty to ensure the safety and well-being of our communities, especially in the face of the challenges posed by border security.

I want to express my full support for the request made by Senators Mark Kelly and Kyrsten Sinema to allocate no less than \$752 million towards the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Shelter and Services Program (SSP) as you deliberate on the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024 Homeland Security Appropriations bill. This funding is of utmost importance to provide critical humanitarian assistance and alleviate the immense strain faced by local governments and non-governmental organizations in Arizona and across our state.

The challenges faced by Arizona and its border communities are palpable. As current FFY 2023 funding approaches depletion, Arizona's border communities, law enforcement, and charitable organizations find themselves on the brink of operational limitations. Without additional support, critical services could be compromised, placing both migrants and local residents at risk. Pima County, for instance, has played a pivotal role in providing essential services to migrants released by CBP, but they anticipate challenges in sustaining these services beyond April 2024 due to funding constraints. Similarly, the Regional Center for Border Health in Yuma, Arizona, and International Rescue Committee in Phoenix face similar obstacles despite their vital contributions to coordinating migrant transportation in Yuma County.

Furthermore, I strongly encourage you to consider the comprehensive funding proposals outlined in the Senate bipartisan border security agreement. This bill, widely supported by stakeholders ranging from the Border Patrol Union to the Chamber of Commerce, reflects the need for enhancing border security while upholding principles of fairness and compassion.

This bipartisan legislation not only strengthens resources to DHS, but also provides vital support for cities and states, like Arizona, grappling with irregular migration. For instance, it allocates funds to bolster the number of Customs and Border Protection personnel by more than 1,500, ensuring a robust presence along our borders to manage the influx of migrants.

Additionally, it includes provisions to combat drug trafficking, such as funding for the installation of advanced inspection machines at Southwest Border ports of entry, crucial for detecting illicit drugs like fentanyl. Despite their effectiveness, many of these scanners remain unused due to Congress's failure to allocate funds for their installation. This lack of funding hampers border security efforts, leaving valuable equipment unused, particularly in Nogales, Arizona, where innovative methods of smuggling fentanyl have been discovered. The new Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII) technology allows for efficient screening of vehicles without requiring drivers to exit, minimizing disruptions to traffic flow at border checkpoints.

These measures not only enhance border security but also protect our communities from the devastating impacts of drug trafficking. This funding is not merely a request; it is a necessity and serves as the linchpin in addressing the complex challenges on our border and ensuring the safety and security of our communities.

Arizona's border is more than a convenient location for politicians to take photo ops and stage press conferences. It's where my constituents live, work, and raise their families. My state has done everything possible to deliver safety and security to those communities, but we need Congress to step up and do its job. It is unacceptable that the security of everyday Arizonans has taken a backseat to political games in Washington, DC, forcing working families in my state to bear the burden of congressional inaction. It's time to prioritize practical solutions over political maneuvers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Katie Hobbs', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Katie Hobbs
Governor
State of Arizona