

## SB 690 (HUESO) TIJUANA RIVER BORDER POLLUTION CONTROL PROJECT

**POSITION:** The Chamber's International Business Affairs Committee voted to SUPPORT SB 690 as amended.

**STATUS:** Referred to Committee on Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials 6/6/19.

### AT-A-GLANCE

SB 690 Requires the San Diego Water Board to negotiate an interagency agreement whereby the state would take over the planning, design, permitting, and construction of a project to capture sediment, solid waste, and polluted flows in the Tijuana River. The bill would require an equal match on funding for the project, and the federal government would take responsibility for the ownership, operation, and maintenance project.

### Amended Bill Summary:

- The San Diego Water Board to take the lead role in planning, designing, permitting, and constructing a waste capture or runoff interception and diversion structure to minimize waste streams from Mexico.
- Federal Government would seek funding authorization to cover the federal share of costs of the agreed infrastructure project, and take responsibility for the ownership, operation, and maintenance.
- Bill Components:
  - The project will divert up to 35 million gallons per day of waste to the existing South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant and the South Bay Ocean Outfall, then diverting the waste deep into the ocean, away from coastal waters.
  - In addition, the project will capture or divert trash and solid waste while addressing bacterial indicators, reducing beach closures and public exposure to bacterial pathogens.
  - An equal match on funding is required for the construction of the project. Federal government funding to cover all project operations and maintenance costs.
  - Should the federal government fail to agree to the terms and conditions by 1/1/21, forthcoming amendments will allow the Water Board to use funding, if approved by the legislature, for projects that don't require the federal government and which significantly reduce waste streams from Mexico.
  - There will be a public comment period for stakeholders to provide input on the project.

### Background:

- Divided by the international border, San Diego shares a watershed with Tijuana which consists of the Tijuana River, the Tijuana River estuary, and the ocean shoreline.

- For over 30 years, the Tijuana River watershed has experienced an increased discharge of trash, sediment, and wastewater from Tijuana's tightly packed neighborhoods that are not captured and sent for treatment, ending up downstream on the beaches of southern San Diego County.
- Rain places additional pressure on Tijuana's subterranean network of sewage pipes, many of which are in need of replacement and maintenance.

Regional Impact:

- Sewage, plastic, heavy metals, and chemical pollution in coastal waters.
- Over 500 beach closures and advisories in the U.S. since 2015.
- Up to 50 million gallons of treated and untreated sewage every day.

The Chamber continues to work with both the U.S. and Mexican governments advocating for the creation of a work plan between both governments to increase measurable efforts in mitigating pollution.

Read full text of SB 690 here: [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201920200SB690](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200SB690)