



402 West Broadway, Suite 1000
San Diego, CA 92101-3585
p: 619.544.1300

www.sdchamber.org

April 6, 2018

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Governor of California
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown,

On behalf of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, I am writing to urge you to reject the request to deploy the California National Guard to our southern border with Mexico. Those of us who live and work in the border region know that the border is not a threat but an opportunity. Our border region is a national model for collaboration and cross-border commerce resulting in a \$2.5 billion manufacturing supply chain that supports thousands of local jobs and enhances San Diego's quality of life.

Our border community, which has double fencing in many areas, is among the safest in the country. In fact, security at most of America's 2,000-mile southern border is tighter than it has ever been. The federal government invests \$18 billion a year to ensure that safety. This is more than all other federal criminal law enforcement agencies combined. In addition, northbound immigration is at a historic low. Border authorities report a 26 percent decrease in the number of people detained along the Mexico border in 2017 compared with the previous year.

As a military town and gateway to trade, San Diego understands perfectly the vital importance of security and trade to our entire nation and there is more we can do to achieve border security. The best investment we can make in additional security measures is through trade facilitation. An efficient border is a secure border with a thriving binational economy. Enhanced infrastructure at our ports of entry should be the priority including investments in technology and staffing of customs agents to achieve greater efficiencies and thereby ensure security.

In fact, sending the National Guard to our border is a risk to national security as it deteriorates our bilateral relationship with Mexico, our number one trading partner and collaborator in fighting the war on drugs and terrorism. We have already seen signs that this relationship is at risk. The Mexican Senate voted unanimously this week to denounce the move to send troops to the border and called for an end to their cooperation on illegal immigration and drug trafficking. San Diego and Baja are powerful partners in community and business with intertwined economies and family. It is with this message of collaboration that we lead an annual delegation to Mexico City comprised of nearly 90 business and community leaders from our region. As our group heads to Mexico City in a few days, we hope to foster this relationship, without the presence of unnecessary troops on the border. Our community and our nation depend on it.

Our borders should be our last line of defense, not our first. I firmly believe sending the National Guard to our border is a waste of taxpayer money and damaging to our economy and national security. We hope you will take into consideration this viewpoint from California's border region as you review the request from the federal government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Sanders', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jerry Sanders
President & CEO