

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **BINATIONAL DELEGATION CHAMPIONS U.S.-MEXICO RELATIONSHIP IN MEXICO CITY**

*Chamber-led group to advocate on key regional issues including NAFTA and port of entry projects*

**SAN DIEGO** (April 12, 2018) – Amid ongoing political tensions between the U.S. and Mexico, nearly 90 business and community leaders from San Diego and Baja California will travel to Mexico City to reinforce the region’s support for the U.S.-Mexico relationship. The San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce’s 13<sup>th</sup> annual three-day Binational Delegation to Mexico City departs April 15.

The group will meet with Mexican leaders and government officials to strengthen economic and diplomatic ties and discuss opportunities for collaboration on projects and issues affecting the region.

“It is increasingly important that we show our region’s ongoing support for the U.S.-Mexico relationship. Our businesses, communities, and quality of life depend on it,” said Jerry Sanders, Chamber President and CEO. “As a binational region we face unique challenges and opportunities. We know that to get ahead, grow jobs, and be globally competitive, we must work together. It’s that perspective we plan to share with leaders in Mexico City.”

The delegation represents a diverse mix of industries, organizations, and elected officials from both sides of the border. Taking part in the trip: San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer, Tijuana Mayor Juan Manuel Gastélum, Imperial Beach Mayor Serge Dedina, Mexicali Mayor Gustavo Sanchez, and Poway Mayor Steve Vaus.

Delegates will meet with a variety of Mexican federal agencies and representatives to help advance the policies that benefit both economies, including:

- Conveying our region’s support for a modernized NAFTA
- Advancing border infrastructure projects including the East Otay Port of Entry, Calexico Port of Entry, and rail port of entry at Tecate
- Securing details/timeline for infrastructure improvements to sewage systems and funding for water treatment facilities

Following last year's historic Memorandum of Understanding between the Chamber and Mexico's Senate, the delegation will meet with the Senate President and Senate leaders to define this year's joint policy agenda. A top priority: ongoing remediation of the Tijuana River Valley sewage issue.

Mexican Secretary of the Economy Ildefonso Guajardo Villarreal will host delegates to share perspectives on the importance of NAFTA and continued bilateral cooperation to cross-border commerce.

Delegates will also learn more about upcoming presidential elections in Mexico and their impact on issues such as NAFTA from a political strategist and national pollster covering the race for one of the city's leading newspaper. In addition, a panel discussion on the intricacies of the U.S.-Mexico relationship will feature experts on foreign and economic relations includes Luz María de la Mora, the former Unit Chief for Economic Relations and International Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Luis Rubio, President of the Mexican Council on Foreign Relations, COMEXI.

Other meetings taking place:

- Alfonso Navarrete Prida, Secretary of the Interior, Secretariat of Governance
- Rafael Pacchiano Alaman, Secretary of SEMARNAT, Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources
- Aldo Flores, Undersecretary of Energy for Hydrocarbons
- Carlos Sada, Undersecretary for North America, Secretariat of Foreign Affairs
- Francisco Muniz, General Undersecretary of Drinking Water, Sewer and Sanitation, CONAGUA, The National Water Commission
- Roberta Jacobson, U.S. Ambassador to Mexico
- Oscar Raul Callejo Silva, Undersecretary of Infrastructure, Secretariat of Communications & Transportation

Additional notable delegates:

- William Ostick, U.S. Consulate General, Tijuana
- Ambassador Marcela Celorio, Mexican Consulate General, San Diego
- San Diego City Council members David Alvarez and Chris Ward
- Coronado City Council member Whitney Benzian
- Tijuana City Council members Maribel Ivette Casillas and Elvia Rangel
- And representatives from various businesses and organizations, including: SIMNSA Health Care, San Diego Regional Airport Authority, Baja California Railroad, Sportfishing Association of California, Index Tijuana, Port of San Diego, and Viasat

The San Diego Regional Chamber is the only Chamber to lead annual binational delegation trips to the U.S. and Mexico capital cities. The full trip agenda is available online, [click here](#).

### **About the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce**

The San Diego Regional Chamber is the hub for connections and collaboration among the regional business community, and uses that clout to advocate for public policies and candidates that support economic growth and the creation of jobs for all businesses. As the largest local Chamber on the West Coast, representing approximately

2,500 businesses and an estimated 300,000 jobs, the San Diego Regional Chamber is fighting to make San Diego the most business-friendly region in California. For more information, please visit [SDChamber.org](http://SDChamber.org) or call 619-544-1300.

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