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REGIONAL CHAMBER, MAYOR AGUIRRE, AND BUSINESS ALLIES UNITED IN CALL FOR WHITE HOUSE TO ADDRESS TIJUANA RIVER VALLEY POLLUTION

Group sent a letter to President Biden and the Chair of the White House Council of Environmental Quality urging the administration to take immediate steps to mitigate transboundary pollution in our region.

SAN DIEGO (March 28, 2024) – Today, the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce – in collaboration with Mayor Paloma Aguirre, Imperial Beach Chamber of Commerce, and a coalition of 16 business organizations and regional stakeholders—led a [letter](#) to President Biden and the Biden-Harris Administration in a united effort to address the ongoing transboundary pollution in the Tijuana River Valley.

In a joint initiative aimed at urgent action, the letter addressed to Hon. Brenda Mallory, Chair of the White House Council of Environmental Quality, highlighted the severity of the pollution crisis in the Tijuana River Valley and urged the administration to take immediate steps to mitigate its impact.

"The direct and growing economic repercussions this ongoing crisis causes –including diminished tourism and harm to small businesses– are substantial and cannot be ignored," **said Jerry Sanders, President and CEO of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce.** "The Chamber is proud to lead this letter to help address the detrimental impacts of transboundary pollution on public health, the environment, and the overall well-being of communities on both sides of the border."

The San Diego Regional Chamber is dedicated to advocating for immediate action in the Tijuana River Valley. Next month, the Chamber will lead a delegation of more than 150 leaders from across the binational region for its annual [Mission to Washington, D.C.](#) delegation trip. The delegation will meet with federal officials and policymakers to share the impacts the pollution is having on the health and well-being of communities on both sides of the border and to advocate for federal support and intervention to address the pollution crisis in the Tijuana River Valley.

"I am grateful to the San Diego County chambers for their support in our fight against transboundary pollution impacting south San Diego County. Imperial Beach has been devastated by sewage contaminating our air and coastal waters," **said City of Imperial Beach Mayor Paloma Aguirre.** "Our beaches have been closed for over 820 consecutive days, severely impacting our local economy, which depends on beachgoers and tourists."

Despite the recent allocation of \$156 million signed into law by President Biden this week, more help is needed. We urge the Biden-Harris administration to declare a state of emergency so we can begin to mitigate this crisis.”

The letter represents a collective voice that spans diverse industries and employers in the region, from small businesses to large corporations. It emphasizes the importance of addressing the pollution crisis as a unified front and calls upon federal government leaders to prioritize this issue.

“The beach may be closed, but the businesses aren’t. Come on down to visit Imperial Beach. We will continue to engage in efforts for economic relief for the businesses that have been affected,” **said Martin R. Mattes, President of the Imperial Beach Chamber of Commerce.**

The letter was supported by regional leaders including:

- Jerry Sanders, President & CEO San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Marcy Weaver, CEO Chula Vista Chamber of Commerce
- Martin R. Mattes, President Imperial Beach Chamber of Commerce
- Rick Wilson, MBA President & CEO San Diego Regional East County Chamber of Commerce
- Jason Paguio, President & CEO Asian Business Association San Diego
- Julie Coker, President & CEO San Diego Tourism Authority
- James O’Callaghan, President & CEO South County EDC
- Mark Cafferty, President & CEO San Diego Regional EDC
- Jason M-B Wells, Executive Director San Ysidro Improvement Corp
- Alejandra Mier y Teran, Executive Director Otay Mesa Chamber of Commerce
- Sherry Yardley, CEO Encinitas Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center
- Sylvie Almeri, Executive Director French-American Chamber of Commerce
- Karen Azhocar McManus, Chairwoman National City Chamber of Commerce
- Scott Ashton, Chief Executive Officer Oceanside Chamber of Commerce
- Kristen Dare, ACE President & CEO, Santee Chamber of Commerce
- Mary England, President & CEO La Mesa Chamber of Commerce

[Read the full letter 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 more than 2,000 businesses and an estimated 300,000 jobs, the San Diego Regional Chamber is working to make the San Diego region the best place to live and work. For more information, please visit SDChamber.org or call 619-544-1300.

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