



October 31, 2025

The Honorable Chad McIntosh
Commissioner
U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC)
4191 North Mesa Street,
El Paso, Tx 79902

Dear Commissioner McIntosh:

On behalf of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), representing over 2,000 member businesses and 300,000 jobs across a variety of industries, we write to urge your consideration to include public comment or recommendations under the upcoming new minute to mitigate the transboundary pollution crisis affecting the Tijuana-San Diego region. Local input will help strengthen the effectiveness of mitigation efforts aimed at protecting public health, the environment, tourism, economic prosperity, and the well-being of the communities and federal agencies working in this binational region.

The U.S.-Mexico region is a dynamic area where public health and environmental challenges are interconnected, population interact, and water resources are shared by both countries. For over 30 years, the Tijuana River Valley has experienced an increased discharge of trash and wastewater generated due to sewage infrastructure inadequacies impacting over 750,000 San Diego County residents. Since 2018, over 100 billion gallons of toxic effluent have entered U.S. beaches and the Tijuana River Valley, translating into up to 12 million gallons of urban runoff a day, and at times at about 50 million gallons daily.

We commend Mexico for completing the rehabilitation and expansion of the San Antonio de los Buenos Treatment Plant, diverting some of the sewage flows for treatment; and applaud the shared commitment of U.S. local, state, and federal stakeholders to complete the expansion of the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant. These collective efforts represent significant progress toward reducing sewage flows that reach our regional beaches and impact our communities. However, it remains crucial to secure the necessary funding for the completion, operation, and maintenance of infrastructure projects that will mitigate pollution and prevent future occurrences.

Recognizing that several key projects remain incomplete, we respectfully urge all parties involved to update the pending items outlined in the new minute, including establishing a defined timeline for procurement and implementation and clarifying which agency will assume leadership of each component. Such measures would facilitate a clear pathway of communication between regional stakeholders and implementing agencies as we continue our collaborative advocacy. Additionally, we request confirmation regarding the availability of funding to sustain ongoing projects and a detailed description of the scope of the procurement process. We further encourage consideration of local stakeholder recommendations, including advancing a comprehensive master plan for regional growth, developing a capital plan to address infrastructure in critical condition, and enhancing reporting mechanisms to promote transparency and accountability.

We also urge the initiation of the project to remove 10 million gallons per day (MGD) from the Arturo Herrera and La Morita treatment plants in Tijuana. Advancing these efforts will be vital to improving system efficiency, reducing strain on existing infrastructure, and supporting ongoing binational efforts to enhance water quality and capacity management.

In conclusion, we strongly encourage the inclusion of a public comment process as agencies review and finalize a new minute agreement expected by the end of this year, and we respectfully submit the following recommendations for consideration:

- **Ensure adequate funding** for the completion, operation and maintenance of infrastructure projects that mitigate the transboundary pollution crisis in our region.
- **Update pending items under the new minute**, including clear timelines for procurement and implementation, designation of agency leadership, and clarification of available funding and expenditures.
- **Advance the development of a master plan for growth**, a comprehensive capital plan, and enhanced reporting mechanism to promote transparency and accountability.

We greatly appreciate your continued leadership and swift action to address the transboundary pollution crisis that has impacted our region for decades. Please consider the San Diego Regional Chamber as a resource and partner in these efforts. Should you require further information or assistance, please contact Kenia Zamarripa, Vice President of International and Public Affairs at kzamarripa@sdchamber.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Cate". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chris" being more prominent than the last name "Cate".

Chris Cate

President and CEO

CC: The Honorable Scott Peters, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Sara Jacobs, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Mike Levin, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Juan Vargas, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Darrell Issa, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Alex Padilla, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Adam Schiff, U.S. Senate