



## United States Senate

May 6, 2024

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Ambassador of the United States of America  
Paseo de la Reforma 305  
Colonia Cuauhtemoc  
06500 Mexico City, Mexico

Dear Ambassador Salazar:

I write to request your urgent attention to the flow of wastewater pollution entering the United States through the Tijuana River and adjacent canyons, as well as the ongoing release of raw sewage from the San Antonio de los Buenos (SAB) treatment facility in Punta Bandera. As you know, both sources of pollution continue to foul beaches in both the United States and Mexico, creating health hazards and negatively impacting the region's economy and environment. As Congress and the Biden-Harris Administration work to expedite repairs and improvements to treatment and conveyance infrastructure north of the border, I ask that you work within your means to convey the critical importance of continued investment from the Government of Mexico.

For more than three decades, the United States and Mexico have worked together to improve wastewater management in the growing Tijuana region. However, despite significant investments on both sides of the border, explosive population growth and underinvestment in wastewater infrastructure south of the border have led to more than 100 billion gallons of toxic wastewater entering the United States from Mexico through the Tijuana River in just the past five years. Additionally, billions of gallons of raw sewage continue to be released from the San Antonio de los Buenos facility directly into the Pacific Ocean, much of which flows north and impacts California's coastal cities and beaches. During a recent visit to the region, I observed firsthand the devastation this pollution is causing, and heard directly from affected communities enduring toxic pollution in their water, air and soil.

I am pleased that both countries are working to implement infrastructure improvements included in the Minute 328 agreement to reduce wastewater flow into the Tijuana River and prevent untreated wastewater from being discharged into the ocean. In particular, I am encouraged that Mexico has broken ground on a replacement for the SAB facility and expects to complete that project later this year. However, upgrades to SAB and the planned expansion of the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plan will only be effective if Tijuana's wastewater collection and conveyance systems are upgraded and appropriately maintained. I respectfully urge your active engagement with our Mexican partners to ensure they abide by their commitments to advance planned mitigation projects that would stop this problem at its source.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laphonza Butler".

Laphonza Butler  
United States Senator