



FIONA MA, CPA
TREASURER
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

October 15, 2024

The Honorable Tom Carper
Chair, Senate Environment & Public Works
Committee
513 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chair, House Transportation &
Infrastructure Committee
1135 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member, Senate Environment &
Public Works Committee
170 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member, House Transportation &
Infrastructure Committee
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: SUPPORT: Environmental Infrastructure (EI) Program for San Diego County and Tijuana River Valley Watershed

Dear Chairmen Carper and Graves, and Ranking Members Capito and Larsen,

As California State Treasurer, I am writing to express my strong support for the inclusion of a new Environmental Infrastructure (EI) program for San Diego County and the Tijuana River Valley Watershed in the final conference report for the Water Resources Development Act of 2024. This initiative is a crucial component in both the Senate bill, S. 4367, and the House bill, H.R. 8812.

The urgency for this funding cannot be overstated: this area of our state grapples with a significant public health and environmental crisis due to raw sewage contamination in the Tijuana River Valley. This situation poses severe risks not only to local residents but also to federal Customs and Border Protection personnel and Navy SEALs who train in these waters.

For years, the San Diego community has endured the detrimental effects of untreated sewage flowing from Mexico into the Tijuana River Valley, resulting in a dangerous mix of pathogens and pollutants. Recent studies have brought to light the serious health risks tied to this pollution, including respiratory problems and exposure to waterborne diseases. The recent storms worsened this situation, contributing an estimated 14.5 billion gallons of raw sewage into local neighborhoods.

The continual discharge of untreated wastewater has also taken a toll on our state's economy. For instance, during Labor Day weekend, unsafe water conditions led to the closure of three beaches in San Diego County, impacting both residents and visitors and harming businesses that depend on beach tourism.

The proposed Environmental Infrastructure program represents a vital investment needed to build the infrastructure required to address pollution in our waters. This funding would support essential projects focused on stormwater management, water quality protection, and environmental restoration. Such initiatives are critical to ensure that our beaches remain safe and inviting for everyone, and prioritize the health and well-being of San Diego County residents.

As your committees prepare for conference negotiations, I strongly urge you to authorize this EI program at the House-passed level of \$200 million. This investment will generate significant benefits for the economy, environment, and public health. I stand in solidarity with San Diego's Congressional delegation in advocating for this essential initiative and appreciate the commitment of our Senators to support this program in the Senate bill.

Thank you for considering this important request. My office is here as a resource, and I encourage you to reach out to my Legislative Manager, Connie Chan, at connie.chan@treasurer.ca.gov or (916) 616-1970 with any questions.

In Peace & Friendship,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Fiona Ma', with a stylized flourish at the end.

FIONA MA, CPA

California State Treasurer