

April 30, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Re: Federal Emergency Declaration to Address Cross-Border Sewage Crisis

Dear President Trump:

On behalf of our communities in San Diego County, we want to first sincerely thank you and your administration for sending EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin to our region to spur action on the Tijuana River cross-border toxic sewage crisis plaguing our communities.

Mr. Zeldin's visit marked a key step forward. Now, urgent executive action is needed.

We respectfully urge your administration to seize this moment and declare a federal state of emergency for expedited expansion of the South Bay International Treatment Plant critical to reducing wastewater flows from across the US-Mexico border.

We understand Mexico's new San Antonio de Los Buenos Wastewater Treatment Plant is completed and weeks away from coming online. This key infrastructure fix will treat 18 million gallons/day of toxic sewage, but the U.S. government must do its part too.

Congress has already allocated \$250 million for sewage treatment plant expansion on our side of the border. Declaring a federal emergency can more rapidly deploy those resources by expediting contract approvals and eliminating bureaucratic delays. We need action now – not years from now.

The Tijuana River cross-border sewage crisis is a full-scale health, environmental, and economic disaster — as destructive as any disaster that has warranted emergency declaration elsewhere. Since 2023, over 31 billion gallons of raw sewage from Mexico have contaminated our coast, closed beaches, and made local residents sick.

We cannot wait for traditional permitting and review processes while children get sick, businesses suffer, and San Diego's coast is devastated. Certainly, America's sewage infrastructure upgrades should not lag behind Mexico's.

We thank the administration for its attention, in particular EPA Administrator Zeldin's sharp focus. Let's work in partnership to fix the Tijuana River toxic sewage crisis. And let's work with extreme urgency. Please declare a federal state of emergency now.

Sincerely,



Paloma Aguirre
Mayor of Imperial Beach



Todd Gloria
Mayor of San Diego



Ron Morrison
Mayor of National City



Terra Lawson-Remer
Acting Chair, San Diego County Board of Supervisors