

February 9, 2009

The Honorable Michele Reagan
Arizona House of Representatives
1700 West Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007

RE: Support for AIDA Reforms

Dear Chairwoman Reagan,

On behalf of the Greater Nogales and Santa Cruz County Port Authority (the Port Authority) I write to express our strong support for H.B. 2252 introduced by Rep. Russell Jones, and the amendment submitted by Rep. William Konopnicki, as it to be brought for consideration by the House Commerce Committee. The provisions outlined in the legislation are critical in order to implement the necessary reforms and funding to get the Arizona International Development Authority (AIDA) working on behalf of border communities.

As you know, unlike the Texas border cities of El Paso, Laredo and McAllen and the California cities of Otay Mesa and San Diego, the border communities in Arizona are relatively small in comparison. Yet, it is also the Arizona border cities that also face some of the most significant challenges in terms of security and trade with fewer resources available.

Our border cities, which barely reach the 25,000 range in population, must deal with the effects of cross-border traffic and trade that would challenge cities and communities that are 10 times that size. The Nogales-Santa Cruz County region needs to have additional tools available to meet the needs our residents and the entire Arizona-Sonora region and beyond. We are also aware that Douglas and San Luis are faced with similar challenges, challenges that we could jointly meet through AIDA. Without AIDA the Arizona border communities lack the financial stature to secure the necessary investments needed to meet the challenges that our border represents.

Arizona's border with Mexico must handle:

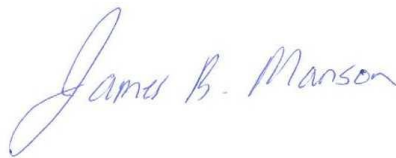
- 32 million crossers each year
 - Nogales alone processes 16.5 million crossers
- 368,400 commercial trucks
 - 291,000 through Nogales alone

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Again, the combined population of the Nogales/Santa Cruz County region reaches 45,000, the volume of traffic through our ports of entry far outweighs the resources we are able to bring to the table from our local resources. It is our belief that AIDA will allow us to be more proactive in meeting the needs of our residents and ensuring that we can promote sustainable economic development strategies for our community.

For the record, the Port Authority has stated its support for the reforms currently under consideration since 2006 and we hope that we will be able to approve the necessary changes to make AIDA the valuable tool that we all expect and need for growth and development of Nogales and all the Arizona border communities.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James B. Manson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

James B. Manson
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Russ Jones
The Honorable William Konopnicki