

United States Senate

May 8, 2009

The Hon. Patrick Leahy
The Hon. Judd Gregg
United States Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs
127 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy and Ranking Member Gregg:

I am writing to request that you consider the following appropriation for fiscal year 2010:

- An additional \$2.5 million above the administration's request for the International Law Enforcement Academies (ILEA), to be divided equally among the five ILEAs. The ILEAs are funded through the State Department Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL).

International Law Enforcement Academies (\$39.2 million total)

I respectfully request an additional \$2.5 million above the President's request of \$36.7 million for fiscal year 2010 for INL to fund the ILEA program, with the money to be equally divided between the five existing ILEAs.

ILEAs offer criminal justice curriculums that provide foreign law enforcement officials with the skills and knowledge needed to combat terrorism, combat transnational crime, and institute democratic policing practices in their countries. In addition to helping protect American citizens and businesses through strengthened international cooperation against crime, the ILEAs' mission is to buttress democratic governance through the rule of law.

The ILEA in Roswell, New Mexico is the only ILEA located in the United States. ILEA Roswell is operated by the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (NM Tech). According to the information provided by my office by NM Tech, the amount requested beyond the administration's fiscal year 2009 budget would be used to expand student participation, purchase critical learning materials, to replace outdated computer equipment, and implement distance learning. Because Roswell's is the only ILEA to offer graduate-level instruction, I believe that an additional appropriation of \$500,000 is particularly warranted here.

The administration's budget describes plans to expand the ILEA program by creating a Regional Security Training Center for Africa and possibly establishing an additional ILEA campus. This expansion plan is evidence of the importance of the ILEAs. Accordingly, the budget requests funds significantly above last year's funding level for this expansion. I believe it is prudent to simultaneously strengthen the existing ILEAs while this expansion occurs.

In addition, I support the administration's funding request for the following program.

Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC) -- \$2,249,000

BECC develops and implements environmental infrastructure projects along the U.S.-Mexico border relating to wastewater treatment, drinking water preservation, solid waste management, and air quality improvement. As of December 2007, BECC has certified 135 projects, of which 74 are located in the United States. In addition, BECC's Technical Assistance Program has allocated more than \$33.5 million to aid in the development of 255 environment infrastructure projects. These projects are funded by BECC's sister organization, the North American Development Bank (NADB).

BECC is undertaking innovative strategic planning efforts along the U.S.-Mexico, which are intended to identify critical environmental infrastructure needs in the border region. For example, the needs assessment recently completed by BECC for the border counties in New Mexico has identified specific technical assistance needs related to mitigating air quality problems associated with highly trafficked unpaved roads. BECC is uniquely positioned to provide such assistance.

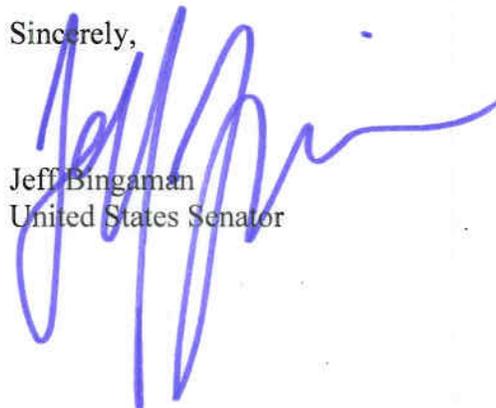
To further advance such efforts and achieve a comprehensive strategic planning approach for the entire region, BECC has proposed the development of the Municipal Strategic Planning Initiative (MSPI). MSPI will formalize a collaborative effort with local, state, and federal governments to better plan for community development trends, while considering environmental infrastructure needs and the sustainable management of natural resources. This enhanced planning effort is anticipated to result in an effective prioritization of available funds to address community needs and protect the environment and human health of the border region.

BECC and NADB were established pursuant to a side agreement of the North American Free Trade Agreement. BECC's operating budget is jointly funded by the United States and Mexico. I support the administration's request for \$2.249 million for the U.S. contribution in FY2010. This request is \$129,000 more than the contribution in FY2009. Of this increase, \$80,000 is to partially fund MSPI. The other \$49,000 will be spent on the Technical Assistance Program, which has had significant success in the past.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has a pecuniary interest in any of the congressionally directed spending item(s) that I have requested, consistent with the requirements of paragraph 9 of Rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate. I further certify that I have posted a description of the items requested on my official website, along with the accompanying justification.

Thank you for considering these requests. If you have further questions, please contact Jeffry Phan at 202-224-5839.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff Bingaman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jeff Bingaman
United States Senator